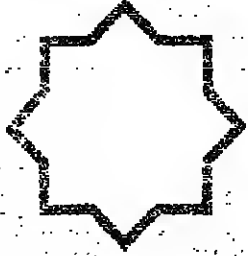


The Star



Jordan's political, economic and cultural weekly

AMMAN, 5-11 SEPTEMBER, 1996, VOLUME 7, NUMBER 17, 350 fils

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اسبوعية سياسية مستقلة

Arabs side with Iraq after US missile attacks

Tension heightens as allies expand no-fly zone in the south

LA Times-Washington Post

News Service

AMMAN—Although President Clinton's decision to bomb southern Iraq may have boosted his standing at home, it was deeply unpopular throughout the Arab world—even in the countries that joined the United States in fighting Saddam Hussein during the Gulf War.

Most people here saw Saddam's foray into the Kurdish city of Irbil last weekend as a legitimate exercise of national authority, Tuesday's US air strike—followed by another on Wednesday—which began shortly after the sun came up, was viewed not as a defense of the beleaguered Kurdish minority, as Clinton described it, but as an unjustified American violation of Iraqi sovereignty. Irbil, after all, is part of Iraq.

"The Iraqi republic is only doing the natural and proper thing," wrote Bahraini columnist Hafeed ash-Shaikh, "by reasserting its sovereignty over the north and raising the national flag over Irbil." Ash-Shaikh noted that even though Saddam's regime may be illegitimate, there is no question that the legitimacy of the Iraqi state is unassailable.

"Saddam had no option," said another Gulf columnist, Omran Salman. "The area concerned is, after all, not Iranian, American, Turkish, British or French, but part of Iraq."

On a grassroots level, many Arabs saw the attack as further evidence of an American double standard toward the Middle East, whereby Arab states that step out of line face grave consequences while Israel does as it pleases. Others attribute the timing of the attack to election-year politics in the United States.

In the corridors of government, the airstrike was equally unpopular. None of the Middle East coalition partners from the Gulf War participated. The Arab League, which represents 22 Arab countries, denounced it. Despite a visit from Gen. John Shalikashvili, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Jordan was unabashedly chilly.

"Jordan rejects any effort aimed at undermining the sovereignty of Iraq and the unity of its territories and people," said Information Minister Marwan Muasher.

"I think for us, the Gulf War has ended, and it should end now for the United States," Ibrahim Ezzadin, who served as Jordan's minister of information during the Gulf War, said in an interview. "Such acts are out of proportion and really not accepted."

In a televised speech Tuesday, Saddam sought to exploit Arab sympathy for Iraq, accusing the United States of hiding behind technology and vowing to continue his resistance. In his defiant tone and apocalyptic language, the speech evoked memories of the Gulf War, when Saddam was widely revered among the Arab masses for standing up to the West.

By most reckonings, the Arab world has grown weary of Saddam's posturing. There were no reports of anti-US demonstrations such as those that erupted during the Gulf War. "I think Saddam has lost much of the mass appeal he had five years ago," said Radwan Abdullah, a political scientist at the University of Jordan.

At the same time, Arabs are distressed by harsh international trade sanctions that have



caused widespread humanitarian suffering in Iraq. Many believe that given the failure of the trade sanctions to bring about a change of government in Iraq, the United States and its allies should quit punishing ordinary Iraqis for the sins of their leader.

Kuwait, which was invaded by Iraq six years ago in what led to the Gulf War, said it "fully understood" the need for the

American strike. But other Gulf countries were less positive. A key American ally, Saudi Arabia, remained silent for hours after the raid.

The foreign minister of Egypt, another close ally, said his country was "really disturbed and concerned," and even the foreign minister of Syria, a country that has no love for Sad-

dam, said he opposed intervention by the Americans.

Arab citizens and their governments objected to the strike for several reasons in addition to their belief that the West was meddling in internal Iraqi politics. Many of the countries involved—Turkey, Iran and

Continued on page 2

Un demi-siècle de poésie avec Fadwa Toukan

Voir page 10

Signs of erosion appear in coalition after US bombings

LA Times-Washington Post

News Service

UNITED NATIONS—A sharp split among Gulf War allies who drove Iraq from Kuwait in 1991 has prevented quick Security Council reaction to Iraq's weekend attack on a Kurdish faction and the subsequent US missile attacks to punish Baghdad for moving troops into northern Iraq.

Britain was trying to build support for the United States with a suggested resolution that

would condemn Iraqi attacks on the Kurds. But Russia and France, which have been trying for a year to ease sanctions on Iraq, were unhappy with the US action and scented unwillingness to endorse it.

Russian Ambassador Sergei Lavrov said Tuesday the US missile attack on Iraq was "disproportionate" and not "acceptable." He said Russia wanted a council resolution that would instead "express great concern" over events in Iraq.

France, which shares veto power with Britain, Russia, China and the United States, was unhappy with Washington for not consulting Paris before launching its missile attack, said a French diplomat, who predicted a lengthy effort to achieve consensus on Iraq among the former Gulf War allies.

France and Russia pointedly criticized US airstrikes on Iraq, morning the Clinton administration's hopes for allied unanimity against President Saddam Hussein.

France was conspicuously frank among NATO allies in refusing to endorse the US cruise missile attack. The French government said it viewed the evolving situation

in Iraq with "anxiety."

Spain expressed understanding but simultaneously voiced regret that the missile barrage was not postponed. Britain and Germany, meanwhile, declared outright support for the decision to retaliate for Saddam's movement of troops into the protected Kurdish zone of northern Iraq.

President Clinton telephoned French President Jacques Chirac Monday night to inform him of the impending strikes. According to reports broadcast in Paris, Chirac tried in vain to persuade Clinton to take a more measured response.

A French Foreign Ministry spokesman said that under the circumstances of the American presidential election campaign, France understood Clinton's "motives." Clinton referred to those political pressures in his conversation with Chirac, according to a French official.

Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeny Primakov took up that theme on a visit to Bern, Switzerland. Primakov, an old acquaintance of Saddam who shuttled to Baghdad before the 1991 Gulf War, said the strikes "cannot be supported by any-

Continued on page 3

Ammarin resigns in protest of Kabariti's 'patronising role'

By Hamdan Al Hajj

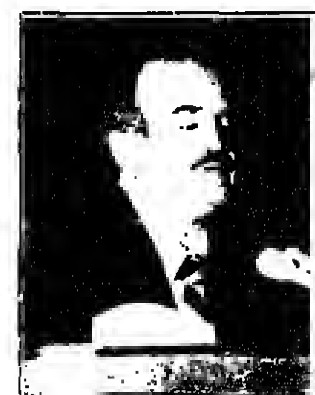
Special to The Star

LOWER HOUSE deputy, Mr. Nazih Ammarin, has officially submitted his resignation from the House last Sunday. Ammarin described the decision as hard and bitter saying that "it was not an easy step to leave my position."

He told The Star that his resignation is not an escape from responsibility, but, on the contrary, it is a bold decision taken in protest of the government's recent policies in dealing with the latest Karak demonstrations. "The government shows no respect for the deputies and assigns itself as a patron of the Lower House."

Ammarin explained that the humiliating reprimand he received from the Prime Minister, Abdul Karim Al Kabariti, and Mr. Jamal Al Sarraih, minister of post and communications made his decision to resign irreversible.

Mr. Kabariti and Mr. Al



Ammarin



Kabariti

Sarraih allegedly made telephone calls with Ammarin on the first day of the south riots attacking him with humiliating words. "The government seeks to diminish the role of Parliament by giving deputies portfolios in the Cabinet," Ammarin said. "With such a large number of deputy/ministers, Parlia-

ment will no longer assume its strong democratic role."

The relations between the executive and the legislative authorities should be based on cooperation rather than seeking a truce whenever differences come to the surface. Ammarin

Continued on page 3

News analysis America's policy on Iraq was never clear

By Timothy M. Phelps

LA Times-Washington Post

News Service

THE DREARY desert and muddy swamps of southern Iraq absorbed \$70 million worth of American cruise missiles with little more than puffs of deadly smoke.

There was no sign that President Saddam Hussein had gotten the "message" spoken of by President Clinton in his Oval Office address Tuesday, and little expectation among experts that he would.

His soldiers were still ensconced among the rich oilfields in the strikingly beautiful highlands of northern Iraq, undisturbed by the commotion that the United States had chosen to concentrate 500 miles away from the scene of his actions.

The latest US action is the bitter fruit of a policy that was

never clear about either Saddam's political role in Iraq or how to deal with the Kurdish problem. The United States would have loved for Saddam to have left power, but stopped short of unseating him during the Gulf War. Despite some recent diplomatic efforts, the United States has remained aloof from the civil war that had wracked the Kurdish areas.

Even Saddam has won an even bigger plum than a Kurdish city in the north of his own country. He has finally succeeded in driving a wedge between the United States and its Gulf War allies, the Arab or Muslim countries that five years ago did the unthinkable and supported the American and even their Israeli friends against a brother Arab country.

The Arabs, let down by a victory that left Saddam in power and dismayed by an Israeli

election that makes the chances of a "peace dividend" look bleak, Tuesday condemned the US move.

As always, the only real victims are the Iraqi people, who now will not get the bread, butter and medicine denied them by a five-year embargo that was to have been partially lifted by the United Nations in a matter of weeks.

This includes the Iraqi Kurds, or those among them who chose not to throw in their lot last week with their bitterest enemy in Baghdad, inviting, as Acep said, the wolf to guard the hens.

But the Kurds garner little sympathy in the Arab world, or outside of a few living rooms in Boston or Berkeley. Fierce mountain warriors who wear distinctive baggy pants, they are not Arabs, for they speak

their own, distinct language. They are, like Saddam and most Arabs, Sunni Muslims, but their sad circumstances are threatening to their correlative.

Said to be the largest ethnic group in the world not to have their own homeland, they straddle the borders of Iraq, Turkey, Syria and Iran, and their demands for independence send a chill through all of them.

"Saddam has the effrontery to flaunt his power, to flex his muscles, to tell the world he is in control of own country when we have spent five years trying to keep him from control of his own country," said Richard Bullitt, director of the Middle East Center at Columbia University. "And we find that intolerable. He is showing disrespect for the power of the US."

Like other Middle East experts, Bullitt thinks it unlikely that Saddam will

respond as intended.

"Any likelihood that the Iraqis will respond to the signal or that they got the message or feel defeated—that's unlikely," said Bullitt. "Will escalation get us better results? Unlikely. Have we achieved anything? Can we achieve anything? That too, Bullitt says, is unlikely."

The American strike, carried out without explicit backing from any UN resolution, was, Bullitt said, "poorly grounded in law or in fact, but strongly grounded in emotion."

Bullitt is one of those who believes that the basic mistake was made four years ago when the United States decided not to go all the way to Baghdad to eliminate Saddam.

But William Quandt, a Mid-

Continued on page 2

Girls' deaths awaken Belgians to the evil at home

By Dean E. Murphy

LA Times-Washington Post News Service
LIEGE, Belgium—The dark circles beneath Gino Russo's heavy eyes tell the story of a father's living hell.

For more than a year, the Belgian steelworker searched the world for his 8-year-old daughter, Melissa, who disappeared one day last summer while playing with a friend in a suburb of this gritty industrial town in east Belgium.

Italy, Spain and Holland. No Melissa. Mexico, Argentina and Brazil. No Melissa. Germany and Canada. Still no Melissa.

Several weeks ago, a despairing Russo told his wife that he had a hunch their daughter was closer to home. He was tragically right. Within a few days, the bodies of the little girl and her playmate turned up in the backyard garden of a convicted pedophile about 50 miles from here.

The sexual abuse and killing of two third-graders would break the heart of almost anyone, but the case of Melissa Russo and Julie Lejeune has done much more. Their horror has turned an entire country inside out, at once uniting Belgium's disparate cultures in grief while simultaneously shattering their faith in the decency of their shared



World Report

believed like the parents did, the girls would still be alive."

Belgium is a country where scandals typically erupt from politics and its lin-

guistic divide—the contentious line that separates Dutch-speaking Flemish provinces from the French-speaking Walloons—not from society's failure to protect its most vulnerable members. Violent crime is relatively low, and pedophilia is regarded as the scourge of sandy beaches in Southeast Asia, not the wooded flatlands of Western Europe.

But the case of Melissa and Julie has suddenly changed all that. An angry and traumatized public has forgotten its language war and vented its collective fury on the system, blaming the police, the courts and the political establishment for having failed the two girls—and the rest of Belgium with them.

The indignation has grown even greater in recent days as speculation mounts that politics was involved from the beginning in the still-unfolding pedophilia scandal, which already has led to 10 arrests.

Russo, Bouzet and others allege that well-connected suspects have been afforded "political protection" by authorities, and a highly regarded children's activist, Marie-France Dote, claims that the Justice Ministry is sitting on a politically sensitive list of customers of ped-

ophile videotapes produced by Melissa and Julie's accused abductors.

The affair has become further clouded by the unexplained discovery of a motorcycle at the home of the main suspect, convicted child rapist Marc Dutroux, that reportedly matches the description of one used in the 1991 assassination of prominent Belgian businessman and politician Andre Cool.

Michel Bourlet, the head prosecutor on the pedophile case, has publicly declared that the investigation can be thoroughly pursued only without political interference. Several years ago, Bourlet was removed from the highly charged Cool case, which remains unsolved.

"In situations like this, Belgians tend to stick together and turn against the state," sociologist Claude Javeau said.

But as the sordid details of the girls' ordeal become known, the growing likelihood that a Belgium-based pedophile network was responsible for Melissa and Julie's deaths also has compelled Belgians to look inward for answers to many troubling questions, including why they have been so slow to address problems of missing children and sexual abuse.

The police only set up a national task

force on missing persons last year after the abduction of Melissa, Julie and several other young girls set off a panic among parents. Until then, there virtually was no cooperation among the scores of municipal police forces and the national gendarmerie, all of which worked on the presumption that missing children were runaways.

"Just a year ago, when the parents were coming in, the first reaction was, 'Come back tomorrow if your child still hasn't returned home,'" said Van Rillaer, who heads a staff of five in the missing persons unit. "Now everyone is aware of the problem, and they don't take that risk anymore."

The Belgian government, meanwhile, only last week approved new measures to make it tougher for sex offenders to qualify for early release from prison. Dutroux, 39, served less than half of a 13-year sentence for raping five girls in the mid-1980s, the youngest of whom was 11.

At the core of Belgium's heartache is the sickening realization that Melissa and Julie were alive for nine months following their abduction but that a series of clues and tips about their whereabouts

were so mishandled by the authorities that no one ever found them alive.

Police said Dutroux, allegedly their main captor, made the girls' lives hellish, confining them to a windowless subterranean dungeon, where they were sexually assaulted while being videotaped for pornographic films.

But Dutroux has told police that the girls did not die until March, when they succumbed to starvation in their concrete quarters within a day or two of his release from jail, where he had been held since December on suspicion of theft. Belgian media have reported that Dutroux's wife, Michele Martin, told police that she was supposed to have fed the girls while Dutroux was in custody.

Revelations about Melissa and Julie's last months alive have brought calls for revenge throughout Belgium. Hundreds of thousands of people have signed petitions, including one calling for the reinstatement of the death penalty, which was abolished last year. Others have demanded harsher prison sentences for pedophiles and strict controls on early-release programs.

But cries for blood have had a mostly hollow ring for the Russo and Lejeune families. Both sets of parents have refused to lend their names to pro-capital

Continued on page 2

JORDAN

W E E K

An unconventional report on Jordanian news and views edited by Marwan Al Asmar

Ciller cancels visit to Jordan

THE TURKISH Foreign Minister and deputy Prime Minister, Tansu Ciller, took a last minute decision and postponed her two-day trip to Jordan that was due to start on Tuesday. Mrs Ciller said that because of the on-going regional political developments, she felt it was appropriate to cancel the visit to a later date.

In a telephone conversation to His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hussein, she requested the Prince to convey her greetings to His Majesty King Hussein and to the Jordanian people. She said that she was saddened to cancel her trip to the country and hoped that it would be rescheduled very soon.

She added that a visit is important because of the strong relations that govern Jordan and Turkey. Mrs Ciller was heading a delegation of 15 deputies and 70 businessmen.



Tbeishat on toxic waste

■ This week the subject is nuclear waste or dumping. The Minister of Municipality and Rural Affairs, Dr. Abdel Razzaq Tbeishat, says that it has never been the policy of any Jordanian government to allow any kind of dumping of toxic materials on its ground. He said that this is an absolute decision that was taken long time ago. He added that the rumors that an American company wanted to bury nuclear waste in Jordan are totally wrong. He said that the Aqaba Regional Authority signed an agreement with an American company to treat the exhaust fumes of the ships that are docking in Aqaba. The Minister added that the company is willing to treat wastes from



Tbeishat

industry and hospitals in the same way. This was agreed upon provided that the company does not bring from outside any toxic wastes and bury it in the country. However, as to dangerous wastes in the country, Dr Tbeishat said that there is only one dumping site in the south of the country, just east of Swaqa. The minister stressed that most of the wastes that are dumped in this site are hospital and industrial wastes.

Wow, gardens for the people

■ Making Amman green is the slogan. And this could be right. Three cheers for Dr. Mamdouh Al Abbadi, the dynamic Amman mayor. He has just opened four gardens in East Amman: Al Qweismeh, Marka, and two gardens in the



Al Abbadi

Tareq area. Mr Abbadi was criticized before for concentrating on West Amman. Well, the four gardens should put the record straight!

Water modernization

■ It's water this week. You may say "oh no, not again," but I think it's worth it, plus, it's news, and important one at that. You won't be surprised to find out that 55 percent of water in the country is lost through delapidating pipes. And that's why the government is changing all the water infrastructure in the country. But this seemingly gigantic project won't be finished till the year 2000 at a cost of JD 200 million. The Assistant General Secretary for Project Affairs of the Jordan Water Authority (JWA), Nawaf Al Dawood said that the quantity of water distribution is 218 million cubic meters annually. If losses can be reduced to 20 percent then that would be in line with the internationally accepted standards. Mr Al Dawood said the JWA has already completed a number of modernization projects in Irbid at a cost of JD 20 million, Zerga at JD 6 million, Al Ramtha at JD 4.5 million and Al Mafraq at JD 3.5 million. In the town of Salt, the whole water infrastructure was changed at JD 16 million. The projects that are currently going on include Jabal Luweibdeh, Jabal Amman, from 1st to 3rd Circle at JD 4.5 million, Jabal Hussein, Al Hussein Camp and Al Nuzha at JD 4 million, as for Ayn Janah and Kufranjeh in Ajloun, the modernization is costing JD 2.5 million.

Airport renovation

■ Queen Alia International Airport is to undergo a modernization program. The facility is to include three phases: information systems, counters and furniture and a new method of luggage handling. This is based on a careful study that was carried out by the government of Holland

that relates to Jordan's three airports—Queen Alia International, Amman Civil Airport and the Aqaba Airport. The first phase of the program, costing JD 3 million, will be signed between the Ministry of Planning and a Dutch company as agreed upon by the government of Holland. The director of the Civil Aviation Authority captain Jasser Al Zayad said that Holland has offered to finance 40 percent of the program, while the remaining 60 percent will be offered on loan basis, but this is still under discussion. The Queen Alia Airport has never undergone any renovation since it opened in 1984. The head of Development and Training in the airport, Mr Abdel Raouf Al Ikroor said that the airport needs modernization to cope with increasing number of passengers who are visiting Jordan. He said the study by the government of Holland suggested that Jordan's airports need JD 50 million. Of that, the Queen Alia airport needs the lion share of JD 30 million. Mr Al Ikroor said Queen Alia International was equipped to handle three million passengers a year. In 1995, more than 1.7 million



Jalal Rifai/Ad Distour

Kheir resigns as Lower House boss

■ The General Secretary of the Lower House of Parliament, Mr Hakam Kheir, resigned from his post this week. Reports said that Kheir refused a post of advisor in the Prime Ministry. Dr Mohammad Masalha, who is presently a lecturer in the Department of Political Science at the University of Jordan, is expected to take Kheir's place as the new Lower House general secretary. Under the new rule which was approved by the Lower House during its last ordinary session, the Upper House will, for the first time, have a separate general secretary. Mr Zeld Zrelqat will now occupy that position.



Kheir

passengers went through its gates.

Grants for MA students

■ Grants are given to 124 students following Master Degree programs at the University of Jordan. They will be starting

their degree program for very shortly. This is the first time that the university gives such grants to MA students. No doubt, it was because of the triple increase in fees for the MA credit hours that the grant decision was adopted. However, University officials would deny that. They said that the number of students that have been accepted on MA programs number 1000 out of 3000 who applied. This is comparable to the numbers that were accepted in past years.

the new newspaper. Still, we shall have to wait to see the final product.

Eco-management in focus

■ The Friedrich Naumann Foundation, in cooperation with the Jordan Environment Society is organizing an "Ecological Management in Industry and Trade" workshop between 16-18 September at the Philadelphia Hotel. This is an international conference that is targeted towards businessmen, industrialists, politicians and journalists. Lecturers are coming from Europe, Japan, Singapore and the Middle East. The objective of the conference is to introduce Jordanian and Arab participants to an environmentally responsible economy and to familiarize them with the instruments of ecological management. The program of the conference will be full dealing with sustainability, integrated resource management, energy management and environmentally friendly technologies.

N. Azraq mayor resigns in protest

■ Surprise, surprise, would you believe that one of our noble representatives gets only JD 140 dinars a month. Yes, he is the mayor of North Azraq.

Mr Shakeeb Abu Latief, who is a lawyer by profession, was elected last year during the municipal elections that were held all over the country. Despite pleading by the Minister of Municipality and Rural Affairs and the Environment, Dr Abdel Razzaq Tbeishat, Abu Latief was determined to resign.

Elections for a new mayor are now set for 10 October. But it is said that there is more to the issue than meets the eye. Sources said that Abu Latief resigned because of fundamental differences in the running of the municipality according to *Al Sabeel* weekly.

Leftist newspaper closed

■ The People's Democratic Party (Hashd) has closed down the *Al Ahali* weekly leftist newspaper earlier this week. The party said that it was for financial reasons. *Al Ahali*, which was established in 1989, will be relaunched under a different name, complete with new cadres, according to Hashd. But if money is the problem, it is difficult to know how will the party establish

Popular sectors condemn US aggression on Iraq

By Star Staff Writer

THE LOWER House of Parliament issued a statement condemning the American aggression on Iraq and the "desecration of the sovereignty and unity of the Iraq and its people," something that "violates all international morals and norms." The deputies added that "this aggression does not have any basis of international legitimacy and no Security Council resolution."

The Lower House viewed this aggression as nothing but "American haughtiness" based on internal US electioneering. The House confirmed the principle that was stated by His Majesty King Hussein concerning the unity of Iraq and said that Iraq must solve its own internal problems without any external intervention. The deputies stressed that the sovereignty of Iraq is part of the sovereignty of the Arab nation.

The American aggression "brings the region back to the atmosphere of tension and violence, as the Arabs and international community are working to help Iraq and its neighbors overcome the effects of the Gulf War," the statement said.

"The Lower House called on the Arab world to overcome its differences," and stand united to "confront the challenges facing the Ummal (nation)." The political and professional organizations united to condemn what it described as the ugly American aggression on Iraq.

The 11-party opposition released a statement describing the latest American strikes as impudent. "The history of humanity had not witnessed such a malicious and blind power, which wants to impose its hegemony on the world ... but the will of the people is stronger and undefeatable," the statement said. The opposition parties pointed out that the US strikes are aimed to serve President Clinton in his lead up to the American elections.

It continued that the US attack is "a violation of international resolutions and a direct threat to all the countries in the area ... it's an aggressive assault on the whole Arab nation and threatens the nation's security and future," statement said.

"We call upon the world to express solidarity with the Iraqi people and defend Iraq's unity, security and independence," the parties said in their statement.

The Muslim Brotherhood said it was Arab weakness that allowed the US and its allies to ride roughshod over the area. "This is an aggression on the Umma, while the regimes are busy in their differences."

The Muslim Brotherhood pointed out that the latest aggression is aimed to fight Islam and maintain a divided Arab world. It aims to continue plundering the nation's resources and oppress its people, the statements added.

The Democratic Unionist Party (DUP), soft left, attacked the US excuses for its latest attacks on Iraq, as "illogical and based on double standards," a statement said. North-

em Iraq has been a ground of continuous violations and wars between foreign powers—Iran, Turkey and different Kurdish factions—but the US and the international community did not protest. DUP officials said. However, the party pointed out that when Iraqi troops moved in its territory, the Americans claimed that it was a violation. Now the implementation of the oil for food deal is postponed yet again which the party considers as more violations against the Iraqi people.

But further condemnations came from Jordan's Professional Associations which considered such actions as against the Arab nation.

In a bitter mood, the centrist party Al Ahad said that, "we find this attack as unjustified, it violates the sovereignty of Iraq as it is interference in Iraqi internal affairs." Furthermore, it violates the international conventions. They pointed that the policy of force against defenseless people is no way to treat the Iraqi issue.

Like the others, King Hussein voiced no support for the plan. But a senior Western diplomat who participated in the meeting said Shalikhshvili was neither surprised nor particularly disappointed.

"We didn't ask whether they agreed or disagreed with us ... Clearly when the US makes a difficult decision like this, we want to have as broad a base of support as possible. But we didn't ask their permission."

Five years after the Gulf War, the United States has never delivered a knockout blow to Saddam Hussein, who remains firmly in control. Although badly weakened, he remains a significant power in the region—a fact his neighbors cannot forget.

Of course, the Americans did try to win Arab support for this week's bombing. At meetings Sunday and Monday with the leaders of Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Jordan, Shalikhshvili gave long explanations of what action would be taken, roughly when it would occur and why—without giving out details.

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Girls' deaths awaken Belgians

Continued from page 1

punishment causes. In a statement issued at the time of the girls' funerals two weeks ago, the families begged at the consciences of ordinary Belgians.

Gino Russo says it is that message that the families will sound again and again during the coming weeks. As the public remains transfixed by the grisly search for more possible victims, Russo said he will not let ordinary Belgians forget their complicity in the crime.

"Our only hope for change is to build on the guilt everyone is feeling right now," Russo said.

Russo is exhausted. He says his head feels like it is about to explode. He hasn't been to work since the day Melissa disappeared. But he cannot stop now. Melissa may be gone, he says, but her brother, Gregory, 12, is not. "This is the only way I know to keep Melissa and Julie alive," he said.

On his part, Mr Arafat reiterated his intention to move on with peace process and working with Israel in all spheres including security to achieve peace. Mr Arafat, referred to Mr Netanyahu as Mr Bibi and congratulated him on his election victory. He described the meeting as positive. But Mr Netanyahu did not commit himself to a date for withdrawal from Hebron.

Later on Wednesday Mr Arafat called His Majesty King Hussein and thanked him for his support and briefed him on the outcome of his meeting with the Israeli premier.

And directly engaging Iraqi troops in the north in order to dislodge them from their lair would likely be militarily and politically unpalatable, Qandari said.

Cruise missiles, the only weapons that involve no risk of American casualties, do little but pinprick damage. The United States will certainly not engage the Iraqis on the ground, and likely will not risk the American pilots who could bring American firepower face-to-face with the Iraqis.

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Arabs side with Iraq

Continued from page 1

Syria—have been fighting Kurdish separatist movements of their own and have little sympathy for them. And many argued Tuesday that Saddam did not march into Irbid to oppress the Kurds; in fact he only came in at the request of the Kurdistan Democratic Party, a faction that represents more than 1.5 million of them.

A big concern for many of the Gulf states, including Saudi Arabia, is that the battle between the Kurds has become, in effect, a proxy war between Iraq and its neighbor, Iran—with the former supporting the KDP and the latter backing a rival faction, the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan. If the United States takes sides against Iraq, they argue, the effect will be to shift the balance of power to Iran—a country that is just as worrisome to its small neighbors as Iraq.

In Jordan, which shares a border with Iraq, King Hussein might have been expected to support the American airstrike. After all, about a year ago, the King was in the vanguard of Arab leaders speaking out against Saddam Hussein.

But in recent months, King Hussein has retreated, in part because he is concerned about Iraq's ability to destabilize Jordan—he blames Baghdad's meddling for the Jordanian bread riots last month—and partly because he hopes one day to resume Jordan's lucrative trading relationship with Iraq. Like many Middle Eastern leaders, King Hussein believes US policy toward Iraq has been halfhearted and ineffective.

Five years after the Gulf War, the United States has never delivered a knockout blow to Saddam Hussein, who remains firmly in control. Although badly weakened, he remains a significant power in the region—a fact his neighbors cannot forget.

Of course, the Americans did try to win Arab support for this week's bombing. At meetings Sunday and Monday with the leaders of Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Jordan, Shalikhshvili gave long explanations of what action would be taken, roughly when it would occur and why—without giving out details.

Like the others, King Hussein voiced no support for the plan. But a senior Western diplomat who participated in the meeting said Shalikhshvili was neither surprised nor particularly disappointed.

"We didn't ask whether they agreed or disagreed with us ... Clearly when the US makes a difficult decision like this, we want to have as broad a base of support as possible. But we didn't ask their permission."

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Declaration from Wahbeh Tamarri & Sons Co.

About the Jordan Bank case represented by the President's administration council, Tawfiq Shaker Fakhour and the General Manager Fayez Abu Eleny.

It has been published every now and then in the local newspapers advertisements about public sale for land property owned by us, which are pawn brocked to the Jordan Bank. From the first look, these advertisements appear legal pressures but the real aim for these advertisements is scandal and giving us a bad reputation. To the public we declare the following:

First: The bank keeps land property guarantees and shares which are about JD 4 million. According to evaluation 10 years ago, the land property are pawn to the account of the Jordan Bank and this has been convinced by the general manager which he says (we asked him to increase the pawn to the bank with another million meanwhile he gave some time ago guarantees to the bank with the value of JD 3 million, indeed he gave the new guarantee.

Second: The pawn cover facilities bank about JD 2 million.

Third: We received bill of lading goods and its value recorded on our account in their bank and they refused to hand it to us until we increase the guarantees and since the nature of these goods can't accept and delay we made an agreement with a bank administration to increase the guarantees another JD 1 million, on the following conditions:

- We receive the bill of lading goods after signing the bill of exchange that has the same value.
- We work on paying the bank facilities.
- The bank will give us new bank facilities about JD 3 million.

Fourth: From our side we did increase the guarantees with about one

Arabs side with Iraq

People & Politics

After the US attack: A new mood takes over

The US missile attack on Iraq this week and the resurfacing of the Gulf crisis on the regional and international scenes cast its shadows on the local arena with Jordanians not hesitating for a minute in condemning the new onslaught and expressing their solidarity with the Iraqi people.

Something good has come out of this sordid affair after all. Jordanians have welcomed their leadership's firm and clear stand on the issue. At the same time Jordanians, like many Arabs, are seeing the American aggression for what it really is—a cheap shot whose motivation lies in pushing President Clinton up a few points in the polls in his bid for re-election.

For the moment political parties and the government are putting aside their differences over bread riots, subsidies and other issues to concentrate their attention on events inside Iraq. The new American aggression has created a sense of unity among Jordanians. It gave them a cause to rally around. Daily newspapers, which for the past few weeks had tried to be neutral, but failed, in the confrontation between the opposition and the government, suddenly took on a fresh and aggressive look. Editorial writers fired their own missiles at the US, Britain and those who support the policy of starving and humiliating the Iraqi people.

Public mood underwent a dramatic change. The US move had dashed the dismal veneer of credibility that it had built since the peace agreements and Mr Clinton's visit to Jordan and his address to Parliament. The US again is seen as an enemy of Arabs and Muslims, whose sole objective is to protect its oil supplies, and Israel, in this region at any price. Jordanians welcomed the statements of His Majesty King Hussein, after his talks with Gen. Shalikhavi, which coincided with the publication by Jordanian weeklies of excerpts from the lengthy meeting between the King and former prime ministers a week ago. According to the unofficial transcripts of the meeting, a number of former premiers warned against the repercussions of the deterioration in Jordanian-Iraqi relations and questioned the wisdom of Prime Minister Abdul Karim Khatir's anti-Iraq policies.

During his meeting with the American General in Amman the King was quoted as saying that Jordan will not permit any anti-Iraq operations from its territory and that Jordan reiterates its support for the Iraqi people and the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Iraq.

The government also issued what many saw as unusually strong statement, which although had failed to condemn the US aggression, warned of attempts to compromise Iraq's territorial integrity.

The national anti-American mood is not expected to wane soon. Most Jordanians are enraged by US indifference to Iraq's suffering and suspect that the latest campaign could actually be the beginning of a grand design to divide Iraq or extend its suffering and humiliation by shelving the oil-for-food deal, which was about to come into effect soon.

At the same time, there is a fresh sense of inter-Arab solidarity coming into form as the US attack was either condemned or criticized by most Arab countries. Added to this is the stalemate that is suffocating the Arab-Israeli peace negotiations since Likud took over in Israel.

US assault on Iraq

Daily press editorials display mixed reactions

JORDANIAN DAILIES commented last Wednesday on the American military action against Iraq.

Ad Dussour daily said that the American missile attack against Iraq can only be regarded as a barbaric aggressive action that targets the integrity of Iraq, violates its sovereignty and independence and exposes its future to the greatest risks. The arrogance of American force is an explicit violation of the Security Council's Resolutions and the international legitimacy and an embodiment of the Yankee mentality which controls the political and strategic decision-making in the USA.

The daily concluded by a call for another Arab summit to which Iraq is invited whose objective is solving the Iraqi question through an Arab solution, not an international one. *Al Rai* daily said the American military operation against Iraq is a link in the chain that began in 1991 and no one knows when it will end, unless all active political forces in Iraq which believe in Iraq's integrity, sovereignty and independence can begin a national dialogue to ensure a better future for the generations to come. Jordan will always be keen on the security and stability of all Arab countries, their national unity and territorial integrity, as much as it is keen on the respect of human rights everywhere in the Arab world.

Al Awwaq daily said that the components of Jordanian position towards Iraq include Jordan's keenness on the integrity of Iraqi territories, its interest in a national dialogue between all Iraqi factions and the rehabilitation of Iraq in order that it plays again its proper role in all arenas. We have always warned against dangers of keeping the situation in Iraq the way it is. We have also warned about the great harm done to its people as a result of the embargo and the irregular circumstances lived by Iraqis. It is now clear for all parties how important is the national dialogue in Iraq which enables Iraqis to face foreign interventions, ambitions and aggression. We do not accept any justification for the military actions in Iraq as they contradict international legitimacy which denounces aggression directed against others.

Continued from page 1

Then as now, the killing Saddam machine that would surely have been with him and his more numerous sons, the Shiite Muslims who the south of Iraq to take the influence of the regarded as a threat to the north.

And directly engaged troops in the north to dislodge them from the would likely be militarily unfeasible.

Crude missiles the American casualties, but, pinpointed damage, the United States will engage the Iraqi ground, and likely will the American pilots will bring the American and face-to-face with the

Amman stressed that his resignation "does not serve the interests of the government, particularly in the current situation, since it means the absence of a popular and independent deputy from the Lower House."

Describing the government's response to the unrest which



His Majesty King Hussein bids farewell to Sultan Qaboos of Oman who left Amman, Tuesday, after a private four-day visit to the resort. The two leaders discussed the latest developments in the region. The visit highlighted relations between the two countries.

Raif Najim of the Al Aqsa Restoration Committee

'Jerusalem is part of the Islamic doctrine and thought'

EDITOR'S NOTE: Mr Raif Najim is the deputy President of the Al Aqsa Restoration Committee. He has long been in government service. A former Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs, he also served as Minister of Public Works. He talked to *The Star's* Raed Al Abed about the challenges that face Jerusalem in the light of the new building of settlements onslaught approved by the Netanyahu government.

Excerpts follow:

How do you see the future of Jerusalem in the light of the new Likud government?

There is no great difference between Israeli leaders concerning the policy over the Jerusalem question, be it the policy of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu or past ones. They all have the same strategy, but have different tactics. The tactics of Shimon Peres and Yitzhak Rabin of the Labor Party differ from those of Netanyahu's. They are unified in their view that Jerusalem cannot be divided and will remain the capital of Israel. They also believe in continuing to build more settlements particularly in the eastern part of the city which is inhabited by Arabs. The number of Jews in the eastern part have become more than Arabs.

Previously, the Labor Party (not Likud) planned to build 17,126 new settlements in the eastern part of Jerusalem.

These settlements could accommodate 75,000 Jews. Peres froze the construction of further settlements in the city but did not cancel such a policy. Netanyahu affirmed it again. In this regard, strategies of all Israeli leaders are identical. They all call for building more settlements and they all agree on the economic blockade of the Palestinian territories. I don't expect any change in the Israeli stance towards Jerusalem.

The problem is inside us as Arab and Islamic countries. We are 43 countries but unable to

have a unified stand, every Arab country has its own policy, there is no coordination on this issue between the neighboring countries (Syria, Egypt, Jordan and the Palestinian National Authority).

The Israelis will use their pressure on the United States to transfer its embassy to Jerusalem as soon as possible, certainly not later than 1999.

They wanted it in time for celebration of Jerusalem's 2000 anniversary. Transferring the embassy before that year will be a major success for the Israelis.

We have not thought of the matter yet and remain hesitant about taking a serious decision on the issue.

How do you feel about terms like 'east Jerusalem' and 'west Jerusalem'?

As an Arab and Islamic principle, there is only one Jerusalem on the map of the globe, it should not be divided, as Jerusalem is part of the Islamic doctrine and thought. There is no eastern Jerusalem.

Amman pointed out that there have been attempts by some of his colleagues in the Lower House, his friends and officials to persuade him to withdraw his resignation.

Asked if he would accept a compromise, Amman said that "the issue now is out of his control, and the matter is in the hands of the people of his government." He added that "the Prime Minister must make a public apology to me or to the Lower House."

Regarding the House's response to the resignation, Amman explained that "it is the authority of the House to decide and give the final judgment."

Mr Amman concluded that if one opposes the wrongdoings, this does not mean he or she is against the country. "We are loyal to the country and there is no doubt that such loyalty emanates from the love of our homeland."

In the PSD headquarters, Amman claimed that he was cross-examined by the Prime Minister and the directors of the General Intelligence Department and PSD. The Minister of Interior, Dr. Awad Khaleifa, was also present.

Some suggest internationalizing the Old City of Jerusalem. Do you think it is the right solution?

The internationalization of Jerusalem means losing it. It is making the United Nations in charge of Jerusalem as a whole, with no exclusion of any state.

The world doesn't have the right to rule Jerusalem. Because it means that Arabs and Muslims will only have a small share in the city.



Raif Najim

lem and western Jerusalem. But we can talk in terms of an eastern and western parts.

Politicians and the press used to commit a grave mistake when they talked about

Internationalization of the city won't solve the problem.

What does internationalization mean in this case? If it means that the United Nations will be responsible for Jerusalem, then Israel has to cancel its claim of making Jerusalem as its capital and stick with Tel Aviv. Also when the Palestinian people have their own state in Palestine, they wouldn't be able to make Jerusalem as its capital because it would be internationalized. This means that it will be open for the whole world and will be supervised by a committee that will be formed by the United Nations, and selected by UN member states.

Internationalization of the city and making it a capital for Israelis and Palestinians can never co-exist. But, making it a capital of two states, is a possibility, on the basis of mutual agreement and a true intention from the Israeli side.

Jerusalem is under a continuous threat by Israel which wants to change the Arab character of the city by searching for the so-called Temple Mount under the Al Aqsa mosque. How far are these threats affecting the holy places in Jerusalem?

All excavations made in Jerusalem in the past decades, are nothing compared to the Israeli excavations of the city in the past 20 years.

They exceeded all the excavations made by the British, American, Russian or German organizations.

Israel aims at finding a shred of archaeological evidence of the Temple Mount, to prove to the world that the Mount was here and should be rebuilt on that land, at the site of Al Aqsa Mosque and Dome of the Rock.

Despite the excavations by the Israelis, no evidence shows that the temple was there. There is no historical document that specifies the real location of the Temple Mount. Even the Old Testament which talks about the Temple, does not specify its location.

The excavations by the Israelis are dangerous, particularly the underground tunnel along the walls of Al Aqsa mosque which left the mosque hung on its pillars, any earthquake will mean its collapse.

Also Bab Al Amood Wall which separated the eastern part of the city from the west-

Signs of erosion

Continued From page 1

one at all, except those who put domestic politics including pre-emptive situations above all else."

Alexander M. Kalugin, deputy director of the Department of Near East and North Africa at the Russian Foreign Ministry in Moscow, noted that Saddam had started pulling troops out at the time of the strikes. The allies, he said, "could at least have waited to see if Saddam would fulfill his promise to pull out by Sept. 4."

German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel called the attacks "appropriate and justified," and Canada also expressed approval.

There were varying degrees of enthusiasm and caution from other world capitals.

In Beijing, the Chinese authorities called for restraint on all sides.

Japan, which relies heavily on oil from the region, cast its approval of the operation in the conditional tense. A Foreign Ministry spokesman, Kazuo Watanabe, said, "Japan basically accepts (the missile strikes) if Iraq continues its provocative attitude toward the international community."

Spanish Foreign Minister Abel Matutes characterized his government's position as one of "understanding, although we would have wanted that armed intervention to be, at least, postponed."

Herve de Charene, the French foreign minister, reiterated France's concern about the safety and welfare of the civilian populations affected by the military strikes.

In a letter to Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz, de Charene underscored France's previously stated belief that peace and stability in the area can come about only from a dialogue between Saddam's government and the Kurdish groups in the north.

The French government has maintained since the beginning of the dispute that Saddam was acting within the bounds of 5-year-old UN Security Council resolutions regarding the Kurdish-populated region.

"We do not see that United Nations resolutions are called into question by (Saddam's) intervention, especially since there was a written request by one of the main Kurdish movements. Iraq is acting entirely on its own soil," Foreign Ministry spokesman Jacques Rummelhardt said.

Iraq has long been a major supplier of oil to France and an important customer for French arms sales. Saddam and Chirac have known each other for 22 years.

But a US diplomat said, however, that if Iraq continued to flout the United Nations, the Gulf War coalition could be rebuilt quickly.

The original reason for Tuesday's council meeting was to hear about Iraq's compliance with UN inspectors looking for remnants of its heavy weapons program. Iraq is continuing to deceive the United Nations, the council heard from Rolf Ekus, who directs the UN effort to dismantle Baghdad's huge arsenal, which is a major condition for lifting the UN embargo on Iraqi sales of oil to other countries.

Ekus told the council that the United Nations has been unable to account for all of Iraq's long-range missiles, which can reach Israel with chemical, nuclear or biological warheads. He also said that Baghdad was issuing misleading statements about its chemical warfare efforts.

The Council adjourned but not before extending the sanctions against Baghdad for another six months.

Russia and France, which hope to recover billions of dollars in prewar debts from Iraq, had teamed up almost a year ago to push the Security Council to begin lifting economic sanctions on Iraq more quickly than the United States desired. But Iraq shot itself in the foot last year by missing troops on the Kuwaiti border and, after defections by high-level officials, admitting that it had concealed biological and chemical weapons materials from UN inspectors.

In response to the Russian-French campaign, the United States finally agreed last year to Security Council Resolution 986, which allows Iraq limited oil sales to buy food and medicine. But this program, about to get under way, was suspended over the weekend by UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, voicing concern for UN personnel involved in the program who would be working in northern Iraq.

But France called Wednesday for new negotiations to ensure that a UN resolution allowing Iraq to use the proceeds of oil sales for food and medical supplies comes into force as soon as possible.

The Russians had said Tuesday the "oil for food" program should be resumed immediately, but Edward Gnehm, the deputy US representative, said it would take "months and months" for Iraq to begin oil sales, and that new conditions could mean changes in the terms.

The prospect of starvation among Iraq's citizens is one of the factors that has been eroding Arab support for US efforts to deal harshly with Saddam Hussein. This was evident Tuesday when key US Arab allies and potential allies balked at backing the missile strike.

JORDAN Today

The medicinal powers of herbs are popular again

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Call 645-380

Business scene

Jordanian exports to Arab countries over the first five months of this year reached JD 153 million. The exports include foodstuffs, live animals, soft drinks, cigarettes, lubricating oils, chemicals, equipment and other manufactured commodities.

The International Company for Industrial, Commercial and Touristic Investments has signed contracts with French and British companies to prepare and execute designs and schemes for the Hilton and Sheraton five-star hotels in Amman. The company's paid-up capital is JD 14 million. The costs of these hotels are estimated at JD 48 million. The construction of the Sheraton Hotel will start next October and open in April 1998. The 300-room hotel costs JD 27 million. The costs of the Hilton Hotel is JD 21 million. It has 226 rooms and will be opened in the same year. There are other 12 hotel projects to be executed in Jordan at a cost of JD 150 million.

Jordanian exports to Saudi Arabia last year were estimated at \$100 million compared with imports of \$130 million from Saudi markets. These record a sharp rise of 100% as Jordanian exports to Saudi Arabia reached JD 54 million in the first half of this year. The Saudi technical team who visited Jordan recently, headed by Hamid Al Oufi expressed his satisfaction with the advanced technology used in Jordan by agricultural firms. Saudi Arabia is expected to double its imports from Jordan, particularly after the signing of the commercial agreement between the two countries three months ago.

The volume of bounced cheques over the first half of this year rose to 20700 cheques valued at JD 216.7 million. Bounced cheque averaged JD 1048 compared with JD 910 last year. The reasons behind this phenomenon are the economic recession and the shortage in domestic liquidity.

The Industrial Development Bank has granted 104 loans at a total of JD 22.6 million in the first six months of this year. These loans went mainly to the tourism and industrial sectors.

Foreign Exchange

Wednesday, 4 September

	Buy JD	Sell JD
US\$	0.7080	0.7100
£	1.1038	1.1093
DM	0.4754	0.4778
SEF	0.5849	0.5878
FRF	0.1389	0.1396
YEN (100)	0.6467	0.6508
DM	0.4240	0.4261
SEF (100)	0.0467	0.0469

Jordanian electricity sector comes nearer to privatization

AMMAN (Star)—In its efforts to sell large chunks of state industries, the government this week embarked on a program that will eventually lead to the privatization of electricity.

One of the most important companies in the country, the government is pursuing a two-step strategy to privatize the JD 230 million industry.

What happened this week was the conversion of the Jordan Electric Power Authority (JEPA) into a National Electric Power Company, says the Minister of Energy Hashim Al Dabbas.

Electricity is still in government hands but it is to be wholly run on commercial basis.

It can be argued that this step will allow the government to fatten the industry further and increase its profitability so it can sell it at a higher price when the time comes.

The authority has managed to electrify 99 percent of the country at the highest international standards, according to Mohammad Said Arafat, the director of JEPA.

Minister Al Dabbas says that

electricity is a vital factor for life and industry and a reflection of the level of progress.

The first electric power company in the country was established in 1938. This was followed by another firm in Zerqa. Both were merged into one. In 1961, the North Electric Power Company was established in Irbid and was able to provide electricity to many areas in the Kingdom, Al Dabbas says.

In 1967, the government established the Jordan Electric Power Authority. The government became responsible for

generating and distributing electricity while the electric power companies in Amman and Irbid were still operating in the districts.

Power generation in Jordan is high and will be sufficient till at least the year 2005. But there is not so much strain as much as dependence on oil fuel from outside. The minister says that 35 percent of fuel consumption in the Kingdom is used for generating electricity.

Over the years, the electricity authority has become one of the major industries in the country. Its total investment expenditure is about JD 500 million. At present, its total assets are JD 1100 million.

"We have retained revenues for consultation estimated at \$6 million," the minister adds. "The foundation of a national electric power company to run according to commercial basis is a step towards privatization and openness." It would mean greater competition and financial independence, the minister says.

Later on, the Ministry of Energy will offer licenses for other power companies. These national companies will be in charge of producing and distributing electricity.

This is in line with the government philosophy which is to reduce monopolistic control, increase competition and upgrade the standard of services offered to citizens.

The role of government will be to provide energy strategies and long-term planning.



Dabbas

There are 2523 employed in the electricity sector. With the creation of the company, these workers will be reduced. But the workers need not worry. Arafat says that a decision has already been made to transfer these workers into the Ministry of Energy. The workers will have their full rights and allowances.

The minister said that the new company will be linked to the Ministry of Industry and Commerce (as it is the case with other companies in the Kingdom). The company's total capital reserve is JD 270 million.

But what will happen to electricity prices, people are wondering. With every new move to the private sector, one can expect a rise in prices. Dr Dabbas, however, said that the government won't make such increase at the present time.

Zara raises its capital to JD 40 million

AMMAN (Star)—The Zara Investment (holding) Co., is to increase its capital from JD 25 million to JD 40 million.

The chairman of its board of directors, Khalil Al Talhoum said that this rise is being made to cover the investment requirements of the company's historic projects that are estimated at \$180 million in Amman, Petra, Aqaba and the Dead Sea.

The company has offered tenders for the project of the Dead Sea Hotel and the Touristic Village at \$70 million.

It is also participating in the Jordan

Hotel project at \$12 million. Mr Al Talhoum called on the government to increase investment incentives in the tourism sector.

The company was established in 1994 because it believed that the region is witnessing a boom in tourism.

The holding company is 55.5 percent owned by local capital and 44.5 percent is made up of Arab investors.

The company has several investments in Amman, Petra, Aqaba and the Dead Sea, the rule of the Palestine National Authority.

Fair designed to attract mutual trade between region and world

By Munther Hamdan
Star Staff Writer

UNDER THE patronage of the Minister of State, Mr Milfeh Al Reheimi, the Middle East International Trade Fair was inaugurated last Sunday at the Amman International Exhibition in Marj Al Hamam.

The fair, in which 32 local and international companies are participating in, is a step towards putting Jordan on the right course with regard to the development of its commercial and industrial sectors. Other companies participating in the fair are from Brazil, Italy, the Czech Republic and Syria.

The exhibition is an opportunity for businessmen to get

acquainted with the latest technology employed by foreign companies.

A large number of light and heavy industries were on display. Those were metal cutters, stone processors and hydromechanics. Light industries products included coffee machines, ceramics, and readymade wear.

Companies all over the world are thinking seriously of marketing their products in the Middle East as a possible thriving outlet.

Jordan is one of those countries which has a strategic location and a potential to promote its commercial and industrial development.

Beside its efforts towards reforming the economy and attracting investments, Jordan

can serve as a crossing point for foreign products to other regional countries. "Most of the foreign companies have been invited to Jordan for the first time," said Munther Al Tamimi, the marketing manager of Universal Exhibition Corp. He told *The Star* that the fair is a chance for these companies to have agents in Jordan.

The Italian section in the fair is the biggest one as 28 Italian companies are participating. In the last three years, the Italian Institute for Foreign Trade has been responsible for increasing the participation of the Italian companies in the region.

"The reason behind the imminent presence of the Italian companies in the fair is that because Italy is the second importer from and fourth exporter to Jordan," said Mr Raffaele De Benedetti, the charge d'affaires of the Italian Embassy. Asked if Jordanian companies can be competitive to other foreign companies, he said that there are some fields like water isolation which Jordan can improve. "For mutual benefits, there can be joint ventures between Jordan and other countries displaying their products in the fair," he added.

The fair ends today, Thursday.



Veterinary vaccine project signed

AN AGREEMENT was signed this week between the Minister of Planning Dr Rima Khalaf and the German Ambassador in Amman Dr Heinrich Reiner that aims at further technical cooperation between Jordan and Germany.

The agreement centers on aid for the "Production of Veterinary Vaccines and Sera," a project that is carried out by the Jordan Center for Veterinary Vaccines (JCVC), in cooperation with Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) in

Germany.

This is the final phase of the project and Germany has now contributed DM 9.7 million to the project.

The aim of the project is to enable the JCVC to supply the Jordanian market with high-quality veterinary vaccines. In the current phase, the JCVC will be converted into an independent enterprise run on commercial basis.

The project started in 1986 and is scheduled to continue until 1997.

24 Jordanian projects to be discussed at Cairo economic summit

AMMAN (Star)—As the countdown to the Cairo Economic Summit begins, Jordan unveils 24 projects in the fields of energy, mining, transport, tourism, communications and electricity which it will submit to the venue on 11 October.

Jordanian companies from the public and private sectors are also to participate in the summit, Dr Youssef Mansour of the Ministry of Planning said.

There are still doubts if the Cairo economic summit will be convened on time. However, all participating countries have already prepared their projects.

A book is to be issued containing further details of those 24 projects in addition to booklets on investment in Jordan and the new economic regulations.

Jordanian projects have a more local angle rather than a regional one, Dr Mansour said.

He also maintained that the new economic regulations will lead to a noticeable progress in Jordan's economy. The custom's law will mean more trading, because the price of commodities will be lowered and raise the level of productivity and income of citizens.

The law of securities will increase the competence of the financial markets, and the new International Trade Law will protect the local industries against flotation. This will lead to new job opportunities in the private sector.

Adopting these new economic regulations by the Jordanian government, will have a positive effect on the list of projects that are to be discussed in the summit. This will also help Jordan to fulfill its objective to be a centre for commerce in the region, Dr Mansour added.

Saudi-Cairo Bank receives lower rating

CAPITAL INTELLIGENCE announced that it has downgraded the long-term rating of Saudi-Cairo Bank (SCB) from BBB to BBB-. The bank's short-term rating is reaffirmed at A-2 and a stable outlook has been assigned for the next 12 months.

With total assets of \$5 billion at end 1995, SCB is Saudi Arabia's eighth largest bank, controlling a 5.5 percent market share. The bank's capital is 55 percent owned by private Saudi interests, 25 percent by the state-controlled Public Investment Fund and 20 percent by the Cairo-based Banque du Caire.

Most recently, United Saudi Commercial Bank's chairman, Prince Al Waleed Bin Talal Bin Abdul Aziz Al Saudi, acquired 33.4% of SCB's capital. A merger between SCB and United Saudi is the most likely scenario over the medium term and this prospect is viewed as positive as the two bank's profiles complement each other in many respects.

Middle East Bank open doors

By Judy Aita

UNITED NATIONS—The United States and Russia last week formally opened the agreement for the Bank for Economic Cooperation and Development to the Middle East and North Africa, paving the way for economic and commercial integration of the region and hopefully bolstering the sagging peace process.

Representatives of the two nations, co-sponsors of the Middle East peace process, deposited the agreement with the UN secretary general and declared the pact open for signatures by prospective members.

The bank will be located in Cairo. It can begin operations once prospective members complete their domestic ratifications and the agreement enters into force.

The bank has capital of \$3,300 million and drawing rights of about \$5,000 million, the founders said.

"This unique new institution, the result of an historic joint proposal by Egypt, Israel, Jordan, and the Palestinians, is designed to support the Middle East peace process by strengthening and expanding the economic foundation necessary for a durable peace in the region," a joint US-Russian statement said.

The agreement, "will promote private sector investment, regional infrastructure development and regional economic cooperation." The projected bank will complement the work of existing institutions such as the World Bank and "will support regional efforts to establish an open, competitive regional economy characterized by cooperative relations and sustainable economic growth," the statement added.

US Ambassador Edward Galt said the United States believes the bank will play a crucial role in the peace process.

The fundamental aim of the

True economic cooperation

AS THE peace process drags forward and Israel's economy gradually becomes integrated with that of the region, we are often promised the fruits of such integration. While it is understood that the process of peace is a long one, and by no means complete, this might be an appropriate time, nonetheless, to see how peace at the governmental level is being translated into peace on the commercial front.

One of the most noticeable results in terms of business relations has been the reduction in tariffs on Jordanian and Israeli goods. Although outright prohibitions on some goods still exist on items such as tomato paste and table salt for the case of Jordan, both sides have undertaken a process of reducing tariffs on selected items. Israel, for example, hopes to reduce tariffs on textiles from 72 percent to 12 percent by the year 2000. Moreover, according to the Agreement on Trade and Cooperation between the two countries, Israel has agreed to reduce tariff duties by 10 percent for two years and an additional five percent the third year on items including infant food, cheese and tires originating in Israel. For its part, Jordan has agreed to reduce tariffs by 50 percent on such items as cosmetics, lenses, and kitchenware, and by 100 percent on paints, chocolates, and televisions originating in Jordan. In their place however, have been set up a series of bureaucratic measures which makes nine years for the days of higher tariffs.

Both the Jordanian and Israeli sides have set up a series of administrative procedures which willingly or not, impede trade. Regulations as to the number and type of vehicles allowed to carry goods over the border, travel documentation, insufficient facilities at border crossings, and testing requirements have added unnecessary time and costs for the businessmen.

These administrative procedures, which are undoubtedly common in most parts of the world, have turned into bureaucratic nightmares in this part. Only trucks registered prior to 1967, for example, are allowed to enter Jordan from Israel. Moreover, these vehicles must recross the border prior to a 15:00 deadline, which if violated, offenders of this rule must undergo a 12 day security check costing approximately \$700.

Unfortunately, the bureaucratic red tape does not end there. There are numerous other examples of administrative procedures which appear to have no other purpose other than to frustrate business activity. While there has been clear progress on the tariff front, the respective governments do not appear to be making much headway on the administrative aspects of conducting trade which is essential for true economic cooperation.

AFM unaffected by American strikes on Iraq

THE STOCK indicator at the Amman Financial Market was record high at nearly 145 points this week. Such an upward trend continued from last week. The starting point was 141 points, registering a further push at the beginning of this week. This is really encouraging news for investors. The last rise represents the highest increase in three months.

It was driven by the noticeable increase in the shares value of the Arab Bank at JD 4 per share.

The Bank announced its mid-annual earnings at JD 95 million.

Its share closed at JD 235 which is the highest since last March. The increase favored the traded stock of the banking sector as the banks indicator rose to 180 points. This figure was last recorded in May.

However after the American missile strikes on Iraq last Tuesday, the dealers felt slightly perplexed and traded "with a vigilant attitude" of what might happen later on. This atmosphere continued, however, share prices remained stable. Some brokers say that there are internal local factors that provide support and backing for share prices. External factors are of no major concern.

Total dealings at the end of this week were at JD 640,000, 23 percent of which was made on the parallel market.

However, on the international markets, the American aggression on Iraq has led to a rise in the crude oil prices and greatly influenced the European and American stock exchanges. The price of Brent crude oil was up to reach \$22.75 per barrel (a rise of \$1.21). The American crude oil price was up to reach \$23.48 per barrel. Economic analysts expect the price of the western Texas Crude oil to reach \$30.

The British, French and German Stock exchanges witnessed a decline, after the American strikes, while the prices of the American shares recorded a sharp fall. Dealers were anxious of a further increase in interest rates. Dow Jones fell 50 points to reach 5566 points.

The price of the dollar and gold, being the safe shelter for funds, shows a remarkable rise.

The Star
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MARKET WATCH

Highest and lowest performing stocks in the Amman Financial Market

SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jordan Paper & Cardboard 4.92 Zampa Invest. & Education 4.81 Wool Industries 4.72 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Steel Industry 4.83 Wool Industries 3.76 Livestock and Poultry 3.51 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arab Medical Appliances 4.62 Arab Electrical Industries 4.55 Middle East Bank 2.22 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jordan Tobacco & Cigarettes 5.00 Arab Medical Appliances 4.41 Arab Electrical Industries 4.35
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General Arab Insurance 5.00 Jordan Wood Industries 4.95 JIMCO 4.26 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jordan Wood Industries 4.81 Amman Investment Bank 4.00 The Industrial commercial 3.51 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intermed. petro-Chemical 3.22 Universal Modern Industries 3.10 Jordan Wood Industries 4.99 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jordan Gulf Insurance 4.98 Universal Modern Industries 4.84 Jordan Wood Industries 4.42
General Price Pointer 144,340	144,270	143,910	144,800
Trade Volume 572878	590246	747228	695786
Stock Volume 532732	514143	622254	722852

Highest Traded Stocks

• Livestock and Poultry 125.023

• Livestock and Poultry 131.237

• Arab Bank

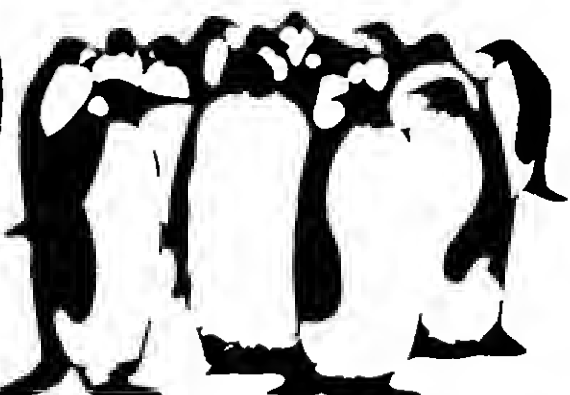
102.890

• Livestock and Poultry 132.428

All data provided by ACCESS Tel: 646868 Fax: 646949

هكذا من الأصل

AROUND TOWN



New issue of Amman magazine

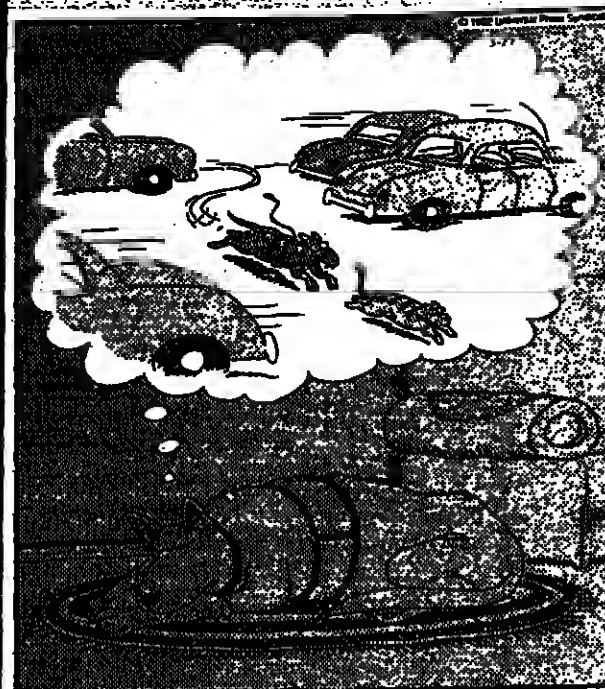
● The 23rd edition of the monthly cultural magazine Amman is now available on selected newsstands. The magazine reviews the activities held in the fourth Fabeis Festival. There is also a panoramic article by Izzedin Manasrah on Amman's coffee shops and restaurants.

The edition included a feature on Abu Dhabi by Mohammad Al Thaher and an art critique by Kifah Al Habib on the lately held Arab Women Artists Exhibition. A full interview with the Syrian artist Tareq Al Shareef sheds light on the Arab movement. This is in addition to the cultural activities held last month and the latest issues of books in Amman.

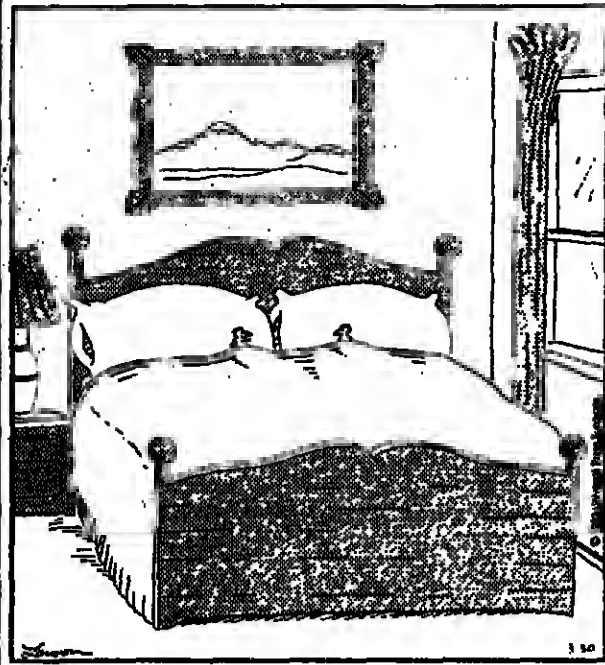


THE FAR SIDE

By GARY LARSON



When seeing-eye dogs dream



"Well, here we are, my little chickadee."



Date rejection lines



"Well, I'm not sure if we can afford stomach insurance — right now we're trying to put the kids through the small intestine."

Myths of Heart and Home Taking refuge in art

By Munther Hamdan
Star Staff Writer

The paintings of the Iraqi artist Batool Al Fekaiki displayed at Baladna art Gallery are the outcome of the artist's nostalgia to the besieged city, Baghdad. The war created a bitter experience in the artist which is expressed in most of her paintings. Al Fekaiki's exhibition, titled *Myths of Heart and Home*, is a combination of her personal experience and the yearning to

the homeland. The exhibition was opened this week under the patronage of Princess Wijdan Ali.

Homesick is the word to describe Fekaiki's paintings. Memories of Baghdad and its people is inherent in the heart and mind of the artist to the extent that loving one's country becomes an obsession. The relation between the two—that is the artist and the home—is heightened to the utmost spiritual levels. Living away from

her homeland, Al Fekaiki seeks to portray the tiny details of Baghdad.

Myths of Heart and Home is a glorification of the setting where one is born. It is a venture through the past when the child is born into a mysterious and huge world. The child comes to a city full of riddles and symbols. But as one matures enough he starts uncovering those secrets to find that what used to be a source of beauty and pleasure has turned hideous. "I am pessimistic and that can be seen in my melancholic paintings," Al Fekaiki told *The Star*.

Silence is a major characteristic which prevails in all of her works. But even if the paintings are silent on the surface, one feels that they are seething inside. They express the artist's anger at the current situation and the absence of human values. "If there was no war and sanctions were not imposed on Baghdad I am sure my works would appear different," she said.

Her concentration on the body and city as one structure points out to the conflict that one lives in exile. Later on, this became a theme which found its way in the artist's works and provided her with plenty of ideas.

In exile, the artist draws mythical pictures of his home which he could never draw when living inside his country.

Though Al Fekaiki's paintings are mainly about the tragedy of Baghdad, the themes are applicable to every human situation. This is the case with some works like *Forming the Scene* in which one can detect the artist's distinguished style.

However, this is not the case

with other paintings like *The Moon of Exile and To Baghdad*. The setting here is rather different since the artist is influenced by the historical significance of the site.

The ancient history of Baghdad is part of the Fekaiki's works. She employed the historical element as testimony to the greatness of the city. In almost all of her paintings, she is preoccupied with the ancient buildings of Baghdad and the religious places which were built by a whole nation.

Al Fekaiki does not alienate herself from the past or place herself away from the accumulative achievements of her people. The old culture is a rich source of which many Iraqi and Arab artists made use in their works. The Sumerian artistic elements are introduced to Al Fekaiki's paintings as parts of a whole structure. For example, there is the wide eyes which historically stood for the mirror of soul.

The pessimistic view of life is conveyed through the dark atmosphere of the paintings. The city and its alleys are painted dark to either represent the current situation resulted from war or to seek sublimation in the mysterious shrines and places of worship. It is just like searching for a shelter or a hermitage among all this destruction.

Al Fekaiki was born in Baghdad and graduated from the Institute of Arts in 1963. She participated in many local and international art exhibitions. Some of these were Al Wasiti Festival in Baghdad in 1973, Iraqi Modern Art exhibition in Italy in 1990 and the Arab Artists Exhibition in London in 1993.

Abu Shakra organizes training course



ABU SHAKRA Trading Agency in cooperation with Elizabeth Arden International Company conducted a training course in the company's headquarters in Geneva for a selected group of the Abu Shakra staff members to brief them on the latest make-up and skin care from Elizabeth Arden.

Mr. Rami Abu Shaker, the general manager of the agency accompanied the group on its Geneva trip and assured Abu Shakra's continued commitment to improve training skills for all its members.

Mr. Mike Durant, the export director for the ME and Africa from Elizabeth Arden welcomed the trainees, praised their achievements and distributed certificates for their successful completion of the course.

Euro-Med culture takes place in Brussels

QN 9-10 September, a meeting will take place in Brussels on projects concerning the Euro-Mediterranean cultural heritage. This is in the framework of the social, cultural and human aspect of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, launched at the Barcelona Conference in 1995. The object of the meeting is to strengthen the dialogue on common cultural questions and to launch concrete regional projects aiming at the enhancement of the cultural heritage.

The Brussels meeting represents the follow-up to the Ministerial Conference (22-23 April 1996 on cultural heritage in Bologna) where the 27 Ministers of Culture reaffirmed, in a common Declaration, the recognition of respective cultural traditions, and the need to reinforce cultural dialogue.

This meeting, which brings together the representatives of Ministries of Culture of the Member States of the European Union and of the Mediterranean partners, as well as experts on cultural heritage and representatives of international organizations, is organized to set up a mechanism for the follow-up of the Bologna Conference. The priority objective of this meeting is to identify and propose concrete regional projects associating as many Euro-Mediterranean partners as possible.

According to the Bologna Declaration, the projects should be in one of the following fields:

Promoting knowledge of heritage through the dissemination of information, awareness programs for the public and decision-makers, inventory of heritage, know-how and techniques; Developing heritage policy through exchanging experience, strengthening of heritage policies and institutional support, Training in skills and professions related to heritage and to cultural activities; Highlighting heritage by establishing an inventory of, as well as developing a network between historical sites used as scenic sites, and by promotion of tourism.

Go and 'Clean up the World'

By Star Staff Writer

POLLUTION IS the curse of industrialization. People are becoming increasingly concerned about nature, the environment and the need to protect it. This concern has become much more global.

The Rio summit a couple of years ago was precisely convened to draw up a strategy designed to increase the awareness of the world and fight such things as pollution and the greenhouse effect.

It is with this in mind that joint action for the protection of nature is coming about. It is with this in mind that the "Clean Up The World" campaign will be held between 20-22 September.

Called Clean Up The World (CUW), an Australian environmental company took upon itself to congregate all international efforts of governmental and non-governmental organizations concerned about environmental issues in the world to save the earth from an environmental catastrophe. The company succeeded in 1995 in launching a global cleaning campaign in cooperation with the United

Nations Environmental Program (UNEP) and the Organizing Committees.

On the local level, the campaign will be very active as well.

The Jordan Environmental Society (JES) will again be taking an active part. It was an active participant in the 1995 campaign. It called on several local organizations, schools, the Army and municipalities, and organized what was called the Zerga Governorate's 1995 clean up. About 10,000 students participated in the campaign.

This year the CUW is planning in cooperation with the UNEP, to hold clean ups in local areas.

This campaign is so important that, on a long term basis, we can expect to see Jordan glowing with "healthy" results. The Jordan Environmental Society, on its part, will see to it that as many people as possible will contribute to the success of the campaign. The society, which views all Jordanians as members, is busy addressing the people to achieve the noble goals of the campaign.

From the end of the world to Amman

By Anca de Maio
Special to The Star

The Folkloric Ballet of Chile (Bafochi) has come "from the end of the world" to display before the Jordanian public the "joy, beauty, colour and harmony" of Chilean customs and traditions, the Ambassador of Chile in Amman, Mr. George Iglesias told the audience who came to see the first of three concerts last week.

Held at the Al Hassan Auditorium in the University of Jordan, the picturesque costumes, the typical hats, the rhythmic hand-clapping, the waving colourful handkerchiefs, and the spinning around of the Chilean national dance "in Cucca" charmed the audience.

After a stop-over in Egypt (where they participated in an international folklore festival), the gifted young professional dancers and musicians gave a thrilling performance.

On Sunday 8 September the public will have another opportunity to familiarize themselves with Latin American values and songs at the Royal Cultural Centre.

This cultural event takes place under the patronage of

Her Majesty Queen Noor within the framework of the Theatre-in-Education program of the Noor Al Hussein Foundation, and in cooperation with the Embassy of Chile. The Chilean Independence Day is celebrated on 18 September.

Although the creator, director, and choreographer of the ballet Mr. Pedro could not accompany his group to Jordan, the performances have proved excellent. Bafochi succeeded in giving a true image of Chilean folklore and tradition.

In the first part of the show, the group concentrated on espousing their country's distinct characteristics, however in the latter shows, the Latin American dimension naturally became a part of the group's performances.

With music and bright cos-



Chilean dancers perform a Polynesian-like thrills

umes, the group presented the very best in dance, the folklore ballet was typically Latin American.

Harmoniously blending Andine folklore with symbolic dance, the group presented classical ballet, the "salsa" and "tango," and northern Chilean dances. A Polynesian-like choreography overwhelmed the show. Bafochi displayed both originality and universality.

"All we knew was Lambada,

but we had no idea of what "la Cucca" and the rest meant," one of the students at one of the performances last week said. Now thanks to Bafochi, they know a lot more.

No doubt this Sunday's show will be equally thrilling. Latin American dances have become part of the Amman cultural scene since the last couple of years and no doubt it is proving a worthwhile experience.

Summer '96 displays serious art

By Star staff writer

Summer '96 which was opened last August at Darat Al Funun is an artistic extravaganza. In addition to activities like film showing, theater performance, music and lectures, the outdoor art exhibitions are quite unique.

Several exhibitions of different artistic styles are spread over wide spaces in the Darat. As you move in, you first see the mosaic exhibition which is displayed in the Byzantine Church. Titled *Paradise mosaic*, the exhibition consists of mosaic constructions reflecting natural scenes.

These constructions are made to present a true picture

at the church, they take the viewer back in time when churches used to abound with these works of art. The works are carried out by the graduates of the Madaba Mosaic school.

As you move upstairs, you are faced with another exhibition titled *Al Basta*. Al Basta in Arabic means the place where the goods are displayed to the public. The aim of the exhibition is to move art to the outside community and keep it away from the indoor, closed setting.

The idea of Al Basta is the brainchild of the Palestinian artist Nasser Al Soumi along with other Jordanian artists. They decided to use crates of the same size and shape in their

A human being's head carved in rock is an amazing sculpture that comes next on the show. Weather conditions helped Ali Taleb, the artist, to choose this particular rock and create a head out of it.

Way up in the Darat lies a glass construction exhibition by the Iraqi artist Arast Taleb. The panes of glass are constructed to convey different shapes if viewed from different angles.

Taleb says that he first became acquainted with glass through the glass triangles that reflect reality.

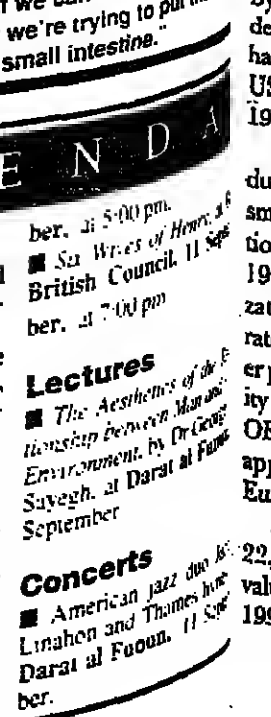
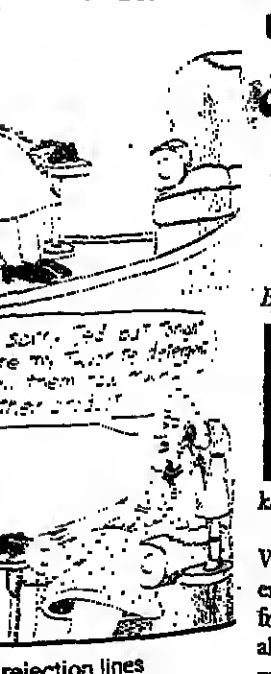
A photography exhibition by the Jordanian artist and architect Ammar Khammash sheds light on the uniqueness of villages in Jordan. Such villages include Samad, Ma'in, Soumia and others.

Khammash, who specializes in anthropology and archaeology concentrated on the human dimension when shooting his pictures.

Khammash went inside old houses to take pictures for the old beds, sheets, blankets and pots. He presented the simplicity of life in the village and commented on the pictures quondam old people living in these areas.

The Darat also holds a handmade paper and graphics shows.

Summer '96 which runs until next October, provides the average person and art lovers with the opportunity to get acquainted with works of art made out of simple and natural materials yet conveying deep meanings.



SEPTEMBER 1996
A special section offering
fresh perspectives on
global issues prepared for
The Star

THE WORLD PAPER

PRINTED IN FIVE LANGUAGES
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Bathing, Asian style—putting a best practice into practice



Czech Republic grows by giving away

'Privatize as fast as possible'

By Jaroslav Veis

IT WAS EARLY 1990 when Vaclav Klaus won his first battle in the campaign—waged under the slogan, "Privatize as fast as possible"—to transform the Czech Republic into a modern democracy with free market economy.

His victory was born of a refusal. When offered the position of governor of the Czech National Bank, from which he would have been able to keep an eye on the inflation rate but do little to influence the development of the national economy, Klaus declined. Instead, he opted for the position of finance minister.

As finance minister, Klaus had the clout necessary to change the blueprint for the Czech Republic's economic transition. By pushing the rapid privatization of the economy, Klaus and his supporters were sending the message that any private owner is better than the state. They put an end to the previous transition process, which aimed to create a hybrid between the socialist command economy and market theories.

When Klaus went to work, he had the advantage of working with an economy that was probably the best of any post-communist state. Czechoslovakia had a well-qualified labor force, political stability, a comparatively very low inflation rate and the smallest foreign debt in the region. By the time he had finished, the country's debt had an A rating, and foreign investors had turned on a tap that poured over US\$5 billion into the country between 1990 and 1995.

Klaus and other economists introduced restitution of property in 1990, small-scale privatization and liberalization of prices of consumer goods in 1991, the first wave of "voucher privatization" and liberalization of interest rates in 1992, the second wave of voucher privatization in 1994, full convertibility of the currency and membership in OECD in 1995 and submitted an official application for full membership in the European Union this year.

According to government estimates, 22,000 small-scale businesses with a value of \$1 billion were sold between 1990 and 1993, over \$4 billion worth of

assets have been restituted to their owners and businesses worth \$25 billion were converted into privately held joint stock companies by the end of 1993.

In addition to these purely economic steps, the Czech Republic separated from the federation with Slovakia on January 1, 1993. At the time, the move was seen only from the political point of view, with analysts characterizing it as a step towards stability. But it soon became obvious that it was the Czech Republic who gained economically by separating from the poorer Slovak Republic: pundits talked about cutting the money pipeline from Prague to the Slovak capital, Bratislava.

As a result of these moves, the Czech Republic was touted as a success story. Both its political and economic transitions were cited as examples of how to manage change, and Klaus—who became prime minister in 1992—became fond of declaring that the Czech Republic's transition period was complete. There are those who disagree.

Today, six years after the first steps of Klaus's transition were taken, his critics

say this is wishful thinking—that a "best practice" has yet to be fully put in practice. They claim that the fiscally conservative rhetoric of the government is far from the kind of European social democracy it practices.

The biggest criticism of the reforms is their superficiality. The largest industrial enterprises have not yet undergone deep structural changes yet. The level of state ownership is still high. For example, the four strongest banks in the Czech Republic, which dominate the local financial markets, are not as private as they declare. The state controls between 30 and 60 percent of the country's four largest banks.

Nor does the state show any intention of loosening its control. "The way how [banks] were privatized is not real privatization," says important Czech entrepreneur Viktor Koflen in a recent interview for the prestigious *Czech Ekonom* weekly. "If 30 percent of global deposit certificates issued by Komerční banka carry voting rights for Czech National Bank (which has a 49

percent stake overall), you can't call it privatization."

The banks, directly or through their investment funds, control the majority of the Czech economy. This is why some conservative economists and politicians in the country have started to talk about "banking socialism," their term for the situation where managers of private banks (controlled by the state) control the Czech economy.

According to *Prague Business Journal*, the country's inability to fully privatize its banks or regulate its stock market is undermining privatization and those who have bet on it, such as the minority shareholders who emerged from two waves of "voucher privatization."

Many hoped that taking part in the

voucher privatization would enable them to participate in the national process of privatization. The scheme, never used on a large scale before, started successfully. For 1,000 crowns everyone over 18 could get 1,000 vouchers and "buy" from the list of government stocks. Some decided to invest their vouchers on their own, others to invest through newly founded investment funds.

The two waves of voucher privatization were organized by the government. In the end of 1995 a group of young investors—Motoinvest group—started what they called "the third wave of privatization." The idea was to persuade individual minority stock-owners to sell their bonds for more or less good

► AS FAST AS POSSIBLE PAGE 2

Getting rid of your army is good for business

Peace dividend is permanent in Costa Rica

By Peter Brennan

IN LATIN AMERICA, armies are a source of intimidation, corruption and brutality—and that's against their own citizens.

So what would happen if a country just got rid of its army?

As the first nation in the world to constitutionally abolish its army, following a brief civil war in 1948, Costa Ricans will be the first to proudly declare that life is better all around. "I don't know of any economist in the country who would say it's bad to not have an army," says Jorge Corrales, former president of the Central Bank.

Situated in turbulent Central America, Costa Rica has spent its funds to improve its health and education systems, with the result that it's far better off than its neighbors. Neighboring Honduras may operate fighter jets, but its literacy rate is only 71 percent, compared to 94 percent in Costa Rica.

Guatemala can show off its tanks, but only 26.5 percent of its children attend elementary school, compared to 94.4 percent in Costa Rica.

Quantifying exactly how much the lack of a military has helped the Costa Rican economy over the years is difficult, but almost all economists and business officials agree it's been positive.

"The money that it would have spent on weapons has been spent on education, health and human services. I cannot think of any ways Costa Rica has suffered by not having an army," says Alan Green, director of the British government's trade program for Central America.

Its social indicators are closer to industrialized nations, with a life expectancy of 76 years. The infant mortality rate, the traditional indicator of a nation's health system, is a low 13 deaths per 1,000 births.

An indicator of the health system's ability to handle a difficult situation oc-

The Czech Republic's privatization program. Singapore's Central Provident Fund. Malaysia's "bumiputra" policy. Chile's pension system. From the perspective of emerging economies, these are best practices in practice—policies, programs and institutions which have helped them achieve impressive growth rates year after year. Best of all, there is no copyright that prevents other nations from adopting these practices

Nothing attracts lenders like being debt-free

Singapore's pot of gold dazzles money managers

By Li-Ana

FOR YEARS, Singapore's Central Provident Fund has helped the city state attract foreign funds. Now the 45-year-old institution may reel in people who manage those funds.

Instituted in 1955, the CPF has made Singapore a magnet for foreign investors by keeping the debt-free. Through this system of forced savings, Singapore created a pool of domestic savings that allowed it to fund the massive foreign debt many developing countries rack up in the process of industrialization.

The Central Provident Fund (CPF), which requires citizens to set aside 40 percent of their earnings for saving, has helped the country fill its coffers and develop into a regional financial powerhouse. With current reserves of more than \$80 billion (US\$ 42.9 billion), it has become a cornerstone of Singapore's fiscal strength. Now, eager to expand its role as a financial center, the government is releasing the purse strings to attract foreign fund managers keen to tap local investment dollars.

The CPF has served as an important tool in pulling the country out of debt. When it was first set up in 1955, the island had a negative savings rate. By

SINGAPORE'S FUND MAGNET

Year	Foreign Direct Investment	%GDP Growth
1991	4,888	6.7
1992	6,730	6.0
1996	829	10.1
1994	7,900	10.1
1995	n/a	8.9

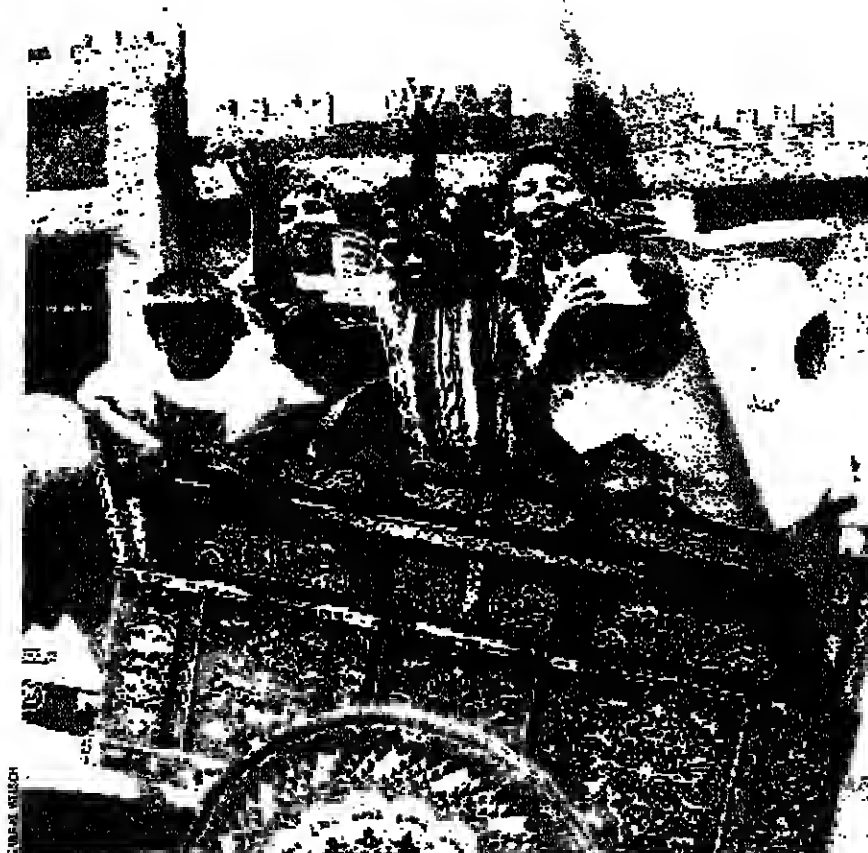
SOURCE: THE WORLD BANK

1990, the savings rate of the economy had increased to 45 percent of GNP, giving the government a pool of funds to mobilize for investment.

The program, imposed on Singapore's working population, began as a retirement savings scheme. But it has evolved into a social security system which allows citizens to use their savings for approved uses ranging from housing payments to mutual fund investments.

Broadly, the CPF works by requiring workers and employers to each contribute 20 percent of earnings—to a maximum of S\$1,200—into an individual's three accounts, resulting in a 40 percent savings rate. The individual can later secure loans against their Ordinary, Medisave and Special accounts for housing, education, or medical payments. More recently, citizens have also used their CPF money to pay for in-

► POT OF GOLD PAGE 2



'It gets better economic mileage than a tank!'

cured when cholera broke out in the region. From 1991 to 1995 there were a total of 106,495 cases with 1,422 deaths in Central America. However, only 87 cases and no deaths were reported in Costa Rica.

Investors are usually very pleased with the Costa Rican workforce. Productivity of bananas, coffee, flowers and other products is among the world's

highest. Experts attribute this to a well-educated and healthy work force.

The "peace dividend" has resulted in more stability, with far fewer crimes than in Guatemala and Nicaragua, where kidnappings are so routine it affects business strategies. For example, a large US textile firm debated whether to establish a factory in Costa Rica or Guatemala.

► PEACE DIVIDEND PAGE 2

Riots gave birth to Malaysia's bumiputra policy

Shotgun wedding paves the way for economic success

By M.G.G. Pillai

LESS THAN THREE decades ago, Malaysia was racked by racial riots as the politically dominant Malay community lashed out at the seemingly indifferent to their problems.

The Malay-Chinese racial conflict, never far beneath the surface, was exacerbated by an official colonial policy of supporting the Chinese—and to a lesser extent the Indians—to develop, under British tutelage, the country that nominally belonged to the Malays.

Far from destroying Malaysia, the riots sparked a series of political changes that helped fuel the economic boom of the 1980s and 1990s. The country's economy is now driven by a multiracial partnership, with the politically dominant Malays and the economically powerful Chinese working in tandem within what is essentially a Malay-dominated framework.

"There is no doubt that this [boom] is helped in no small measure by a political leadership insistent on ensuring that this partnership remains permanently in place," says one foreign fund manager.

What brought this about was a positive affirmative-action program—known as the bumiputra policy—combined with what the Malay world calls *musyawarah* (loosely translated as "consultations"). The Malaysian gov-

ernment, after the 1969 racial riots, initiated a policy of ensuring that the Malays would be forcibly integrated into the business world. Government officials reckoned, rightly, that the Chinese reluctance to bring Malays into their businesses was a time bomb in the making, and all it needed was an assertion of Chinese and non-Malay rights for it to explode.

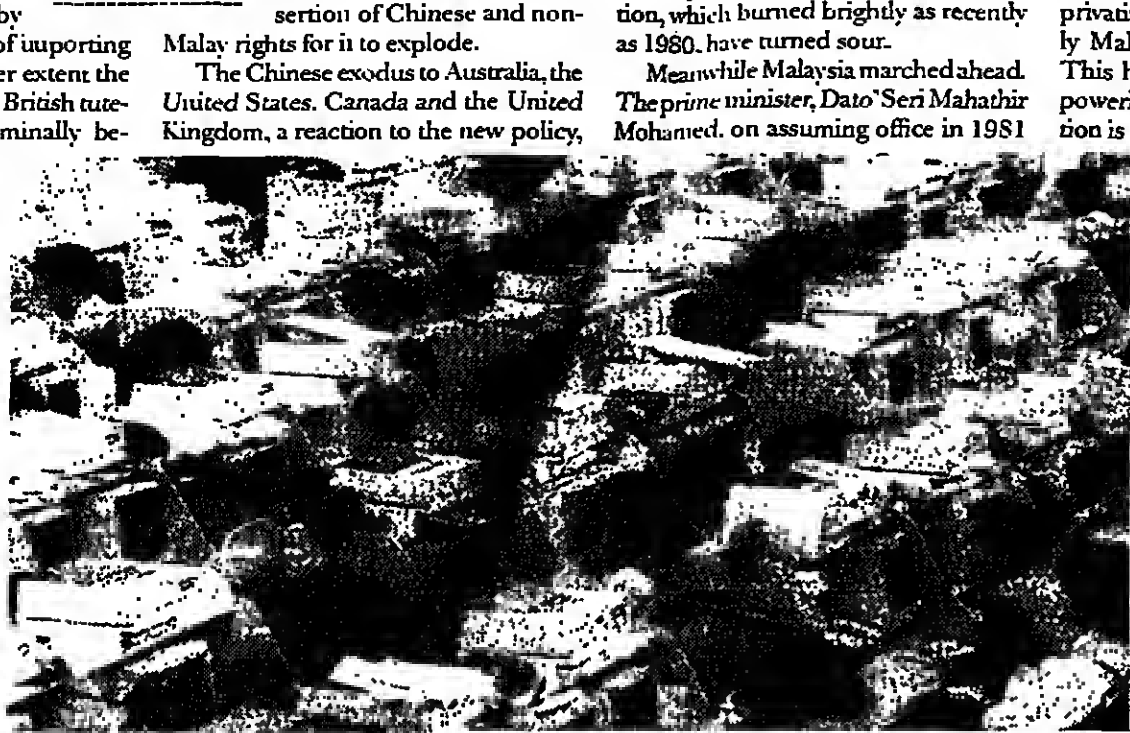
The Chinese exodus to Australia, the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom, a reaction to the new policy,

develop and progress, and they must be given a fair deal.

This policy's success comes into sharp focus when it is compared with the situation in, say, Sri Lanka, where a deleterious civil war between the majority Sinhalese and the minority Tamils turned murderous. The hopes that the country would become a peaceful nation, which burned brightly as recently as 1980, have turned sour.

Meanwhile Malaysia marched ahead. The prime minister, Dato' Seri Mahathir Mohamed, on assuming office in 1981

REPORTING FROM KUALA LUMPUR



Working in harmony: Malaysia's bumiputra policy has eased economic tensions between ethnic groups

initially hardened the extreme positions within the Malay community. The mathematical imposition of quotas in favor of the Malays in education, the civil service, several lucrative areas of the public sector enterprises and on the boards of private and public companies raised the specter of an Indonesian-style downgrading of the Chinese and other non-Malay races into minor positions. But that did not come to be, largely because of the pragmatic way the bumiputra policy was implemented.

In a country where the Malays are only 55 percent of the 18 million people, some rapprochement like this is needed for any arrangement to work. But that rapprochement came naturally to the Malay. The Association of South-east Asian Nations, or ASEAN, succeeds by its ability to resolve disputes by *musyawarah*, even in contentious disputes between members. Underlying the application of the bumiputra policy was—and is—the belief that the Chinese and Indians had helped the country to

found himself in a position to reap the benefits of the bumiputra policy of the previous decade. That policy was enshrined in the 20-year New Economic Policy, which actively pushed the Malay ahead of the others at the expense of other ethnic groups and set a goal of transferring 30 percent of all corporate ownership to Malays.

What is seldom mentioned, and perhaps little understood, is the ground rules that were established to prevent bloodshed. Few Malaysians, Malays or otherwise, challenge the notion that Malaysia is Malay-dominated country where the political culture favors the majority. But there is a "safety-valve," in the form of a provision that allows the non-Malays a free hand in business—provided he does so with a Malay partner. This gives minorities a non-violent avenue for their energies, and also provides Malays with a chance to learn the business skills of their Chinese partners.

The bumiputra policy does have some costs. More serious, perhaps, is

AFTER BUMIPUTRA

Year	Foreign Direct Investment	%GDP Growth
1991	3,998	8.6
1992	5,183	7.8
1993	5,206	8.3
1994	4,500	9.2
1995	n/a	9.6

FIGURES IN \$US MILLIONS. SOURCE: THE WORLD BANK

that it has reduced a lot of politics to local government issues. Major issues of politics are not discussed, since non-Malays see little chance of influencing the Malay-dominated system and fear that rocking the political boat will affect their economic privileges. This system works because the economy is booming. The beneficiaries of many government privatization projects, though nominally Malay, are their Chinese partners. This helps ease the sting of political powerlessness. By and large, the situation is accepted.

Why is this so? Said one Chinese businessman, a millionaire several times over: "When all is said and done, the Chinese have a better role in Malaysia than in almost any other country in South-east Asia. I do not count Singapore, which is Chinese-dominated, but even if I do, Malaysian Chinese get a better deal."

In Thailand, the Chinese were integrated centuries ago, so Thai leaders did not face the situation that confronted their Malaysian counterparts. Indonesia and Vietnam, on the other hand, often restrict the movement and opportunities of their Chinese minorities.

The Malaysian success with its bumiputra policy, combined with a natural move to resolve disputes by *musyawarah*, ensures the underpinning of its economic success. What it did to the Malay, as the former Malaysian foreign minister, Tan Sri Ghazali Shafie, once put it expressively, "is to give him a confidence to strike out on his own, and this caused him to be even more solicitous towards the Chinese and Indian among his midst."®

M.G.G. PILLAI IS A KUALA LUMPUR-BASED JOURNALIST AND POLITICAL COMMENTATOR.

AS FAST AS POSSIBLE

Continued from page 1

price to Motoinvest group. The reasoning was simple: those who kept their bonds ended up losing their investment because the interests of the banks overrode those of minority shareholders.

Ironically enough, these clever and rich young men were right. Observers now say the main achievement of voucher privatization seems to be political. The scheme enabled government to introduce the privatization as a program for the people that even "Joe Everybody" can participate in. Political stability and popular support for the economic policy of the government was the most important result—the stolen dream of Everybody was the price.

After the 1996 elections, Klaus formed a minority coalition government. Many now predict that the progress of reforms will slow down with the rising power of social democrats within this unstable legislature.

The latest figures show that economic development of the Czech Republic is slowing down. The foreign trade deficit is growing and the inflation rate is still very close to 10 percent. If, in the words of Vaclav Klaus, the Czech transition is really "a small economic miracle," it is still a half-finished miracle.®

JAROSLAV VEIS IS A COLUMNIST FOR *Lidove Noviny*, A DAILY NEWSPAPER IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC.

POT OF GOLD

Continued from page 1

insurance, and personal investment.

"The system has worked by creating individual responsibility, and taking financial burdens off the government. Unlike social security schemes in other countries, the money goes to the individual's account, rather than a general fund. This creates an incentive for workers to contribute to their own accounts. It also encourages individuals to pay for their own and their families' needs, rather than depend on government support.

The government forbids individuals from withdrawing the bulk of the funds until they reach age 55. Then, account holders can remove all their money except for a minimum sum determined by the government. The amount, currently \$545,000, is usual-

ly in the form of cash and property. It ensures that account holders, from age 60 till death, will have a monthly income and adequate housing. The minimum is increased periodically to keep in line with inflation.

The Singaporean's ability to invest and save has ballooned the collective CPF account balance to a whopping \$60 billion (US\$42.9 billion). This capability was increased when the government liberalized its rules in late 1994, allowing Singaporeans to invest CPF savings in foreign stocks and bonds on the local bourse through approved fund managers and mutual funds.

In September last year, the government further liberalized rules to attract foreign fund managers. Eager to broaden the country's financial services industry, the government farmed out some of its own fund management responsibilities by offering foreign managers a small piece of the action—at least \$789.2 million worth of CPF funds to work with. These were traditionally managed by the CPF's own investment managers and the Government of Singapore Corporation.

The big prize

Fund managers are apparently enthusiastic. Since last September, 64 new fund management houses have set up offices in the Republic, nearly doubling the total number to more than 110.

While this is a first step towards attracting foreign managers, analysts wonder whether the government will commit more money to fund managers. The big CPF prize that fund managers are eyeing is \$57 billion of retirement funds still in government hands.

Albert Tan, an economist with JM Sassoon & Co (Pte) Ltd, says that, "in the long term, the liberalization of CPF funds will be a gradual process." Tan said other fund managers would be more willing to set up in Singapore if the government would commit more money.

In keeping with past moves, however, the government is opting for prudence. It already sees the measures it has taken to attract those 64 new fund managers as proof of its success. It is still tight-lipped about releasing more money because it wishes to wait and see what effects its initial step will have on Singapore's economy. And while it waits, so will prospective new fund managers.®

LI-ANNE TAN IS A FREE-LANCE WRITER BASED IN SINGAPORE.

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THE WORLD PAPER
Published by World Times, Inc.
210 World Trade Center
Boston, MA 02210 USA
Tel: (617) 439-5400 Fax: (617) 439-5415
e-mail: 74312.2.13@worldpaper.com
Web site: www.worldpaper.com
Volume XVII, Number 9 © World Times, Inc.

The World Paper
appears in the
following
newspapers and
magazines in English,
Spanish, Russian,
Chinese and Japanese
editions:

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Beijing, China

Mainichi Daily News
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PEACE DIVIDEND

Continued from page 1

"It came down to headquarters not wanting to receive a phone call one day that a top executive had been kidnapped," said a manager with the company, which chose Costa Rica.

This is not to say Costa Rica is a paradise. It has a truckload of problems, from heavy pollution caused by vehicles and sewage in rivers to an economy that's currently on the verge of a recession.

Worse of all, Costa Ricans have watched as other nations with armies like Singapore, South Korea and Taiwan have far surpassed it in terms of per capita income during the last 30 years.

Observers here blame it on an onerous bureaucracy, an over-protected marketplace and top-to-bottom corruption at all levels of society that stifles investment. It relies on an inefficient 7,000-police force that for political reasons is changed every four years as a result of a new government being able to choose its own police force. Even though kidnapping is rare, petty thievery is rampant.

Central American critics outside Costa Rica sneer that the country's police force is really an army in disguise. Locals here are constantly debating whether the police should use military ranks, wear military fatigues and have military-style training provided by US Green Berets.

From a US military viewpoint, it's impractical to expect a widespread abolishment of armies, since these armies are part of the US strategy for a joint response to an invasion from outside the hemisphere.

Still, it's obvious that citizens in other Central American nations are not being defended by their military, whose personnel are largely exempt from facing prosecutions for crimes. Military budgets drain millions from the public coffers of these Central American nations. This year, Honduras is spending US\$33 million while El Salvador is spending \$101 million.

"No one knows how these resources are being invested. There is little transparency," says Joaquim Tassan, director of the Center for Peace and Reconciliation.

A little-known aspect is that the military itself is often involved in business. A growing trend among the region's armies is to follow the example in Honduras,

where the army uses its pension fund system to control banks, customs, insurance and even funeral homes.

Abolishment of the armies also implies problems, such as reinserting thousands of soldiers into civilian life. In Nicaragua and Guatemala, ex-soldiers are the worst criminals because they have been trained on how to handle weapons and kill.

Former president Oscar Arias used the funds from his 1987 Nobel Peace Prize to start the Arias Foundation for Peace, which has worked tirelessly to persuade other nations to abolish their militaries. Panama has already done so, and Haiti is in the process of making it part of its constitution.

"Costa Rica is a model," said Tassan. "It's important to show the world that a peace dividend works."®

PETER BRENNAN EDITS THE MONTHLY MAGAZINE *Business Costa Rica*.

At this critical time in our history,
Oscar Arias, Jean-Bertrand Aristide,
James Clark, Betty Friedan, Jane Goodall, Mikhail
Gorbachev, Rigoberta Menchú Tum, Carl Sagan,
Muhammad Yunus and other innovative leaders
from around the world will reconvene to
discuss the preeminent issues shaping
the coming century.

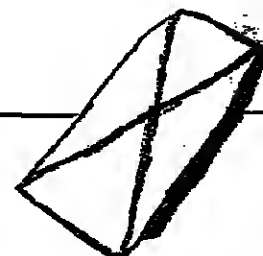
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Le Jourdain

Supplément en français du Star

Pas de sommet économique sans un retrait d'Hébron

● L'Égypte a fait savoir cette semaine au ministre israélien des Affaires étrangères David Lévy que la tenue de la conférence économique régionale prévue en novembre au Caire dépendait du retrait israélien d'Hébron. Le président égyptien Hosni Moubarak avait lui-même déclaré quelques jours plus tôt que l'organisation de cette conférence dépendait «de l'application des accords, pas seulement des discussions ou de la mise en place de commissions». Des propos repris lundi à Tel-Aviv par l'ambassadeur égyptien Mohammed Bassiouni pour qui ce sommet ne peut pas avoir lieu si le redéploiement israélien à Hébron et la mise en œuvre d'autres points prévus dans les accords israélo-palestiniens ne sont pas réalisés «en l'espace de trois semaines». Ce sommet économique est organisé dans le but de relancer l'intérêt de la communauté internationale des affaires dans la région alors que le processus de paix traverse une phase difficile. Cette réunion sera la troisième du genre, après avoir eu lieu en 1994 à Casablanca et en 1995 à Amman (voir photo). Près de 350 sociétés et entre 6 et 7000 participants sont attendus à ce forum économique. Suite aux mises en garde égyptiennes, le Premier ministre israélien Benjamin Netanyahu a déclaré lundi que ces propos ne pouvaient qu'exacerber les tensions dans la région, ajoutant: «Les Égyptiens ont davantage besoin de cette conférence que nous».

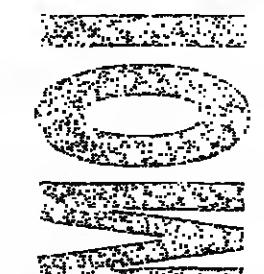


Portrait

Le demi-siècle de poésie de Fadwa Toukan

Fadwa Toukan a été l'une des premières poétesses arabes. Cette femme originaire de Naplouse écrit depuis plus de cinquante ans des poèmes qui font d'elle aujourd'hui un des grands noms de la littérature arabe. A travers son oeuvre qui a pris un tournant plus politique en 1967, elle dénonce notamment la condition de la femme dans les pays arabes. Elle jette aujourd'hui un regard sur son oeuvre et celle des poètes contemporains.

SELON



De méchants ennemis rendent parfois plus de services que d'agréables amis. Au moment où la popularité de Saddam Hussein s'est estompée dans le cœur des masses arabes, au moment où les divisions au sein de la famille Takriti se multiplient et que la communauté internationale finit d'enterrer le dossier irakien, le maître de Bagdad vient de se faire offrir par Bill Clinton un magnifique et inattendu cadeau.

Les États-Unis sont désormais loin du succès médiatique de 1990 et de l'unicité qui existait autour de ses résolutions, et les dirigeants de trente pays amis semblent avoir compris les véritables motifs de la politique américaine en découvrant son vrai visage.

Ce n'est point honorable pour cet Etat, qui se prétend maître incontestable de l'univers, que trois pays alliés jouant un rôle clef dans la région refusent l'emploi de leurs hases aériennes pour que décollent les avions de l'horreur destinés à échanger des vies humaines contre des voix électorales.

Quand trois des cinq pays membres permanents du Conseil de sécurité de l'Onu dénoncent vivement la décision américaine de bombarder l'Irak, quand simplement trois ou quatre pays de l'alliance sacrée d'hier applaudissent les justes et héroïques raids américains, on peut se dire que les États-Unis devraient commencer à se faire du souci.

Si le monde hésite, voire refuse, de suivre l'aventure américaine, c'est parce que des hommes sages ne veulent pas demeurer des pions sur l'échiquier américain ne servant qu'à faire remonter les baisses de popularité d'un candidat à la Maison Blanche.

La position de la France dans cette crise est claire, justifiable et honorable. Depuis le départ des socialistes, la France cherche à faire comprendre que la politique du gendarme unique ne fait qu'engendrer l'injustice et contribue à la disparition des valeurs morales et des principes humanitaires dans ce monde.

La politique de mépris qu'applique les États-Unis vis-à-vis de ses alliés de l'Onu en s'attribuant le rôle de justicier irréprochable de tous les conflits mondiaux et en se moquant de cette organisation et des droits des hommes non-américains, ne peut qu'irriter la France qui cherche à s'individualiser et à faire renaitre dans ce monde un brin de droit et de justice.

La France, consciente de la mainmise américaine, se comporte intelligemment et trouve ici l'occasion incontestée de démontrer au monde entier que l'Amérique se prend les pieds dans une succession d'actes orgueilleux.

La France peut difficilement appuyer la position américaine qui veut interdire au Irakien le libre mouvement à l'intérieur de leur pays alors que les Turques et les Iraniens violent la souveraineté de leur territoire et massacrent autrui de Kurdes qu'ils veulent sous le contrôle des Américains.

La France ne peut pas accepter qu'un homme décrète des résolutions et des sanctions au nom de la communauté internationale contre un autre Etat car il refuse de se soumettre sous la botte américaine malgré six années de famine et des centaines de «Boomerang tomahawks».

Cornelle disait: «A vaincre sans péril, on triomphe sans gloire». Comme Georges Bush et Shimon Peres, Bill Clinton cherche à jouer le dernier pion qu'il lui reste. Un jeu auquel la France refuse dignement et courageusement de prendre part. ■

Soubail Al Sweis

A 70 ans, Fadwa

Toukan garde encore un visage doux aux traits réguliers, un regard expressif et vif. Femme de taille moyenne au cœur palestinien, elle porte en elle la souffrance des femmes arabes qui ont ployé sous le poids de la tradition qui se fiche de la femme, à moins qu'elle ne soit d'une beauté extraordinaire.

Jeune, on lui reprochait son teint pâle et le fait d'être souvent malade. Une raison de plus pour se replier sur elle-même et s'isoler.

Sa famille décide un jour de la punir pour avoir accepté une fleur offerte par un jeune garçon sur le chemin de l'école, dans sa ville natale de Naplouse, ville profondément traditionaliste. Elle la confine à la maison et lui interdit l'école pour préserver la réputation de la famille.

Sa mère a été la première femme musulmane de son village à retirer le voile de son visage. Pourtant, les femmes n'étaient pas traitées comme les hommes. Son frère, Ibrahim Toukan, fut une exception. Il s'est penché sur elle et l'arracha à ses doutes, lui donnant des livres et lui apprenant à lire et à écrire la poésie. Il fit publier son premier poème. Cette nuit-là, elle attendait la punition de son père.

Elle étudia la poésie de Ibn el-Roumi et Ibn Tamam d'où elle s'est inspirée pour écrire ses premiers vers signés sous le pseudonyme de Dananir. Aidée par son frère Ibrahim, lui-même poète, elle se consacra alors complètement à sa poésie qui devait par la suite trouver sa place parmi les grands noms de la poésie arabe.

Pourtant, Fadwa Toukan ne devait pas en rester là. El-Maïla publia sa poésie exprimant la colère contre les traditions, elle trouva un écho auprès de Fadwa Toukan qui voulait se libérer de la forme de la poésie classique qu'elle utilisait jusqu'alors. Pour Toukan, l'importance donnée au mot, au son, au rythme de l'expression

fabriquée et rigide faisait obstacle au mouvement, au flot et à l'expression de la pensée. Femme sincère et libre, la structure artificielle lui pesait et entravait le cours de son émotion.

Elle découvre alors un autre style, celui de Majma'a. Elle décide d'adopter un style direct, fluide, dépourvu d'artifices. Reflet de la pensée de cette femme sincère, sa poésie devient ainsi plus percutante.

Etant célèbre, elle est entourée par des membres de partis nationalistes et des idéologues palestiniens et du monde arabe. Mais elle restait à l'écart, s'interrogeant sur l'absence de sentiment religieux à réunir tous les hommes. Elle ne comprenait pas comment la politique pouvait être la seule source d'inspiration de leurs existences.

En Palestine, la Révolution grondait. C'était en 1936, alors qu'elle se trouvait dans la maison de son frère à Amman. Lorsqu'elle revient chez elle quelques mois plus tard, les émeutes reprennent. Il est question d'un projet de partage de la Palestine. Fadwa est témoin des incursions militaires soudaines dans les villages, des contrôles, des insultes à l'égard des vieux, des arrestations. Dans les années 30 et 40, les règles familiales sont sévères. Et même si son père reconnaissait son talent, il souhaitait qu'elle écrive sur des sujets qui le passionnaient lui. Elle se mit alors à détester la politique.

Des jeunes femmes déjà vieilles

Son père est arrêté à la fin des années trente en même temps qu'une centaine de jeunes Palestiniens accusés d'activisme politique. A celui qui s'était montré des plus sévères avec elle tout au long



La poétesse palestinienne Fadwa Toukan souhaite aujourd'hui se consacrer à l'écriture d'un roman.

de sa vie, elle dédia alors un poème, *Mon père*.

Son frère Ibrahim l'emmena à Jérusalem pour suivre des cours d'anglais et présenter à la radio palestinienne des programmes de littérature arabe. Elle se sentait mieux, dans un climat plus libéré, loin de l'emprise des traditions et de la domination familiale. Elle trouvait dans ce monde nouveau des bibliothèques, des cinémas, de la musique, des soirées littéraires. Ici, la femme avait l'accès à l'éducation et à la culture.

Sa joie ne dura pas longtemps: la deuxième guerre arriva et son frère mourut peu après à Naplouse.

Après la mort de son père en 1948, Fadwa renoua dans sa poésie avec les événements de Palestine. Mais c'est surtout après la guerre de 1967 qu'elle va exprimer sa détresse et faire éclater sa conscience politique.

Poétesse moderne, Fadwa Toukan plaide le renouveau et appelle à une nouvelle expérience de la poésie arabe qui, dans sa forme actuelle, date déjà de plus de trente ans.

De l'amour, elle en parlera dans son autobiographie, *Rahla Joubah*. Emprisonnée dans sa maison, son imagination la transportait vers des horizons lointains au point qu'elle perdait conscience de la réalité environnante.

Enfin libre, elle désespère du «harem». Elle voit des victimes sans personnalité à l'ombre des hommes qui précipitent la violence de leurs sœurs et cousines grâce à la répression. Des vies défilent devant elle à l'âge de vingt-cinq ans. Des femmes sévères, la tête recouverte d'un foulard blanc, qui vivent isolées à l'intérieur de quatre murs sans vraie communication entre elles.

Elle reproche à l'homme son immobilisme, son égoïsme, son incapacité à se forger une personnalité cohérente.

Cet homme continuellement tiraillé entre deux tendances: celle qui le pousse vers le progrès et l'adaptation à l'esprit des temps modernes et celle qui l'enchaîne au passé, faisant de la femme sa première victime. ■

Joséphine Lama

Analyse

Une unité arabe toujours introuvable

Depuis le sommet de Caire en juin dernier, les rencontres se multiplient entre les dirigeants arabes. Des contacts qui laissent présager une meilleure coordination entre les Etats arabes. Mais de nombreux obstacles, notamment économiques, empêchent encore la réalisation de l'unité tant recherchée.

L'une des questions

fondamentales qui dominent le discours politique dans le monde arabe moderne concerne l'unité arabe. Malgré les sentiments vifs inspirés par cette ambition parmi les dirigeants arabes ainsi que les peuples arabes, il est surprenant de constater que les progrès réalisés pour atteindre cet objectif sont négligeables. L'ordre politique découlant de l'accord Sykes-Picot n'a pas été remis en cause malgré le fait que les Arabes ne cessent de le dénigrer, le qualifiant d'accord inique imposé par l'impérialisme. Comment expliquer alors ce paradoxe?

Avant d'aborder ces questions, il est nécessaire tout d'abord de distinguer les faits historiques des mythes. L'empire qui a gouverné pendant des siècles les territoires appartenant aux Etats membres de la Ligue arabe avait l'islam plutôt que l'arabisme comme identité politique. Le concept de l'arabisme en tant qu'identité nationale n'est né qu'au début du vingtième siècle, en réaction au nationalisme turc qui a transformé l'Empire ottoman, le faisant passer d'un Etat musulman ayant pour capitale Istanbul, ce qui était acceptable pour les Arabes, à un empire turc avec des colonies arabes, ce qui a contribué à réduire le statut des Arabes à celui de citoyens de seconde zone.

C'est à ce moment de l'Histoire que la dynastie hachémite n'a pas trouvé d'autre alternative que celle de conduire les peuples arabes vers

l'indépendance, pour fuir une domination turque de plus en plus répressive. La première lutte menée sous la bannière du nationalisme arabe était donc la grande révolte arabe.

Celle-ci n'est pas parvenue à unir les territoires arabes sous un seul gouvernement, mais elle a réussi quelque chose de très important en introduisant une nouvelle idée acceptée par près de 200 millions d'âmes.

Bien que beaucoup d'Arabes ignorent les circonstances historiques qui ont entouré la naissance de leur identité politique, ils acceptent l'idée de leur nation comme un état de fait naturel. Aujourd'hui, il ne fait aucun doute qu'il existe un sentiment d'appartenance à une culture unique et une affinité qui lient les Arabes les uns aux autres. Des éléments qui peuvent être le noyau d'une unité politique. Pourquoi donc celle-ci reste-t-elle alors un objectif irréalisable?

C'est peut-être malheureusement parce que les choix politiques ne sont pas toujours guidés par des émotions nobles mais plutôt par les intérêts propres à chaque Etat. Les économies des pays arabes, loin de se compléter, sont forcées de se livrer une féroce concurrence entre elles pour des marchés de plus en plus limités. Les produits des pays arabes, hormis le pétrole sont essentiellement les mêmes que ceux de tout le bassin méditerranéen, et ces pro-



En juin dernier au Caire, le président égyptien Hosni Moubarak a réuni 21 Etats arabes. Une telle réunion n'avait pas eu lieu depuis la guerre du Golfe.

duits sont en surplus par rapport à la demande mondiale.

Les obstacles qui entravent la réalisation de l'unité arabe tiennent essentiellement aux particularités économiques qui caractérisent chaque pays. Pour surmonter ces obstacles, les Etats arabes peuvent tirer une leçon de l'expérience européenne dans ce domaine. Il faut commencer avec la coordination économique entre les Etats arabes pour créer des économies complémentaires, qui feront de l'unité politique un développement inévitable. Le siècle qui a vu la naissance du nationalisme arabe s'approche de la fin. Peut-être que le prochain offrira une approche plus rationnelle pour parvenir à l'unité. ■

Ali Kassay

Fadwa Toukan

«La poésie actuelle est décadente»

Après toutes ces années consacrées à la poésie, quels sont vos projets littéraires actuels?

Mon ambition est d'écrire un roman. Dans le monde arabe le temps est au roman. Vu la complexité de la situation dans les pays arabes, nous sommes en proie à des conflits, des souffrances quotidiennes qui s'alourdissent de jour en jour. A partir de là, l'art du roman est le genre littéraire le plus apte à exprimer notre long cheminement. Cet art est le mieux à même d'assimiler l'expérience humaine parce qu'il scrute la vie quotidienne, les relations sociales. La poésie suggère et ne dit pas les choses noir sur blanc. Lorsqu'elle tend aux détails et à être explicite, elle perd de sa valeur artistique.

Est-ce que vous pensez que la période des pionniers de la poésie moderne est révolue? Si c'est le cas croyez-vous que la nouvelle génération de poètes arabes s'est engagée dans une voie différente ou opposée à celle des pionniers? Il est sûr que cette période est terminée. La poésie arabe aux mains des jeunes poètes d'aujourd'hui est décadente. La plupart de leurs poèmes se limite à des images sans rapport entre elles qui ne forment pas une trame à laquelle on reconnaît l'art véritable. Peu de temps avant sa mort, le critique Palestinien Jabra Ibrahim Jabra a dit que la poésie dans le monde arabe était sur le point de tomber dans l'absurdité.

La poésie que nous lisons depuis les années 70 et 80 n'a plus cette influence électrisante qu'avait celle des pionniers des années 60. Jabra exprimait l'avis de la plupart des amoureux de la poésie. La raison de ce déclin est l'incapacité qui caractérise la majeure partie de cette poésie, car la nouvelle génération recourt à des métaphores obscures dont le sens se

perd dans le brouillard. Nous ne voyons que des images empilées les unes sur les autres sans aucun rapport entre elles, ni unité, prises au piège de l'obscurantisme et de l'herméisme. Elles ne transmettent plus rien, et n'ont plus d'effet sur la conscience du lecteur.

La langue poétique est devenue, depuis des années, une simple répétition ennuyeuse. Je ne suis pas contre l'obscurantisme ni contre le symbolisme. Mais le symbole sert à incarner le sens et non à l'obscurcir. Nous avons recours au symbole pour donner des sens nouveaux et une dimension plus grande à la poésie. C'est le but du symbole. Sa force esthétique, avant tout, et sa force de suggestion ne peuvent pas être comparées à une image simple et directe. Parfois, il y a des sortes d'obscurantisme qui n'ont rien à voir avec le sens du symbole.

Que pensez-vous de la littérature et de la poésie féminine? Etes-vous d'accord avec l'idée d'une différence fondamentale entre littérature masculine et féminine? Est-ce une distinction sexuelle?

La poésie féminine, la poésie masculine, la littérature féminine, masculine: je suis contre cette division. Ce sont des résidus de pensée ancienne. La littérature dans son ensemble est indivisible. La femme arabe s'est débarrassée des absurdités féminines pour adopter une pensée, des sentiments universels. Il y a des femmes écrivains remarquables dont l'écriture est empreinte d'humanisme, d'intelligence et de sincérité. La femme, lorsqu'elle possède le don d'écrire en plus de la culture et de la capacité spontanée de s'exprimer en prose ou en poésie, rien ne l'arrête.

Jordanie

L'amère potion économique

Pour l'économie jordanienne, les restructurations demandées par le Fonds monétaire international sont obligatoires. Des réformes qui nécessiteront dans l'avenir encore beaucoup de sacrifices.

Si politiquement

les émeutes contre la cherté de la vie qui ont secoué le pays ont des conséquences importantes en Jordanie, elles n'impliquent pas des conséquences économiques néfastes pour le royaume. La Jordanie garde en effet de bonnes relations avec l'Ouest en général dont l'appui financier est toujours important. Mais ceci ne signifie pas que tout va bien dans le meilleur des mondes. L'économie jordanienne a toujours besoin de réformes profondes qui peuvent provoquer de nouveaux troubles dans le pays.

Pour répondre aux exigences du Fonds monétaire international, la Jordanie doit en effet procéder à une série de privatisations, dont la compagnie aérienne Royal Jordanian, les télé-

communications... Depuis le démarrage du programme de réajustements structurels en 1989, cette mesure revient régulièrement à l'ordre du jour. Une économie moderne et dynamique est en effet difficile à imaginer dans l'ombre d'un Etat qui se réserve notamment le droit de vendre des billets d'avion ou d'attribuer des lignes téléphoniques.

Mais avec ces privatisations, une hausse du chômage est à redouter. L'Etat va donc devoir agir «diplomatiquement» pour réussir à faire accepter ce passage à la libéralisation économique.

Le démantèlement du système des subventions indirectes fait lui aussi partie des mesures nécessaires. Pour réussir à contenir les dépenses publiques, le gouvernement devra aussi couper dans les effectifs de l'administration et cesser de verser des salaires pour des emplois fantômes. Des décisions qui ne peuvent que faire gonfler le chiffre du chômage.

Mais ces changements sont inévitables pour transformer l'économie du pays et faire de la Jordanie un pays producteur

et non uniquement consommateur (cf tableau). Importer sans exporter ne peut en effet que maintenir la situation actuelle basée sur une importante politique de subventionnement. Dans l'immédiat, la population se voit contrainte d'avaler cette pilule plutôt amère.

Mais avec ces médicaments économiques et financiers, une amélioration devrait avoir lieu dans l'avenir. Le FMI a d'ailleurs salué «les progrès impressionnants de la Jordanie dans son programme d'ajustement structurel et de réformes», lui octroyant quelques jours après les émeutes un prêt de 300 millions de francs.

Il reste à savoir si la Jordanie peut supporter une telle période de restructurations. Beaucoup craignent en effet que sans changement des mentalités, les troubles qui ont eu lieu dans le sud se répètent.

La Jordanie dépend en effet depuis trop longtemps de certaines aides extérieures et doit désormais apprendre à s'assumer seule. ■

Riad Al Khouri
MEBA S.A.R.L.

Importations et exportations jordaniennes (en millions de dinars)

	1995	1996 (de janvier à mai)
Importations (dont blé et farine)	2590 39	1258 56
Exportations	1005	365
Exportations en pourcentage des importations	38,8%	29%

C'est la vie

L'agenda français d'Amman

Cinéma

«Chouons», de Philippe de Broca avec Sophie Marceau, Philippe Noiret, Stéphane Freiss, Lambert Wilson...
Le 9 septembre à 20h00 au Centre culturel français.

Exposition

«Tapis volants». Une exposition lancée à l'initiative de l'Association française d'action artistique regroupant des tapis réalisés par des artistes français ou originaires du Maghreb et du Moyen-Orient. Ces dix artistes présentent leurs œuvres à partir du 8 septembre au Centre culturel français.



Activities

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American Centre Library	820101	Plaza Cinema	699238
British Council	636147/8	Philadelpia Cinema	634144
French Cultural Centre	637009		
Goethe Institute (Spanish)	610858		
Goethe Institute (German)	639777		
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Y.W.M.A.	664251		
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THE STAR'S

COMPUTING & HIGH TECH

Edited by Zeid Nasser

Mis-use of the 'Magic Cookie' violates privacy of Web users:

Surfers anonymous!

By Jawad Abbassi

Special to The Star

VISITING A company's web page on the Internet is essentially the cyber space equivalent of looking through the display window of a store in the street: one browses, and if one finds a certain good or service of use, a request or service order can be initiated.

The analogy, however, ends there. Onlookers at the display window in the street are guaranteed the security and privacy of their names and addresses. This guarantee isn't extended to web pages—the virtual display windows of the Internet. Many web pages on the Internet utilize a novel method called the Magic Cookie to register the names and email addresses of every Web surfer that stumbles across them. The method is straightforward: the web page copies the information stored in the surfer's browsing software, which usually contains the name and address of its owner.

Magic Cookie was developed by Netscape, a leading developer of Internet applications, for noble purposes. It was to be used to store the viewing preferences for all visitors of a web page so that, when they visit again, they would view the page just as they left it in the previous visit.

However, this original noble purpose has now been stamped with Magic Cookies being used by companies to launch mass email marketing

campaigns to all the email addresses of all the web visitors.

This abuse of the Magic Cookie technology presents legal and ethical questions. In effect, it allows unsolicited peeping on people's IDs to find out their addresses and names. Would the web sites engaged in

out. This, however, doesn't mean that surfers need not look into ways to secure their anonymity while surfing the Internet.

One of the easiest ways to do that is to intentionally configure your software browser to give a bogus name and email address, an option readily available in most commercial browsing applications. Of course, this presents some inconveniences in sending mail as users would need to correctly reconfigure their software when they do want to send an email or fill out a web form.

Another way would be to install certain utility packages that would stop Web pages using Magic Cookies and other "address stealing" techniques from doing this, by preventing the web page from copying the preferences files containing the name and addresses. An example of these utility packages is the Cookie Monster available for Macintosh, which literally eats (deletes) magic cookies made by Netscape Navigator as soon as they are made, or rather... takes!

Expanding the number of surfers anonymous may well be for the common good. It will increase the popularity of the World Wide Web to the point where we may witness the rise of counter groups, to deal with the wide-spread anonymity of users.

Email:

Abbassi@NETS.Com.Jo



such abuse be liable to any legal offenses? And would the announcement that a certain Web site uses the Magic Cookie method, suffice for elevating any legal liability.

These questions underline the new legal challenges that have to be seriously addressed with the advent of the Internet era, and further underline the necessity for concentrated international efforts to make legislation compatible across jurisdictional boundaries which the Internet transcends anyhow. Will the offenders be accountable in the country where the web page is stored or in the country where the surfer, whose privacy was infringed, resides?

On the legal aspects of this issue, the jury, it seems, is still

ing techniques from doing this, by preventing the web page from copying the preferences files containing the name and addresses. An example of these utility packages is the Cookie Monster available for Macintosh, which literally eats (deletes) magic cookies made by Netscape Navigator as soon as they are made, or rather... takes!

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Mexico charges Cesar Chavez with tax fraud

By Mark Fineman
LA Times-Washington Post
News Service

MEXICO CITY—Mexican Treasury Department officials Monday charged Julio Cesar Chavez, the boxer who is this nation's top sports idol, with more than \$1 million in tax fraud after a yearlong investigation of his finances.

Chavez, a former world champion, has called the probe a "public lynching" and "conspiracy." In full-page newspaper ads, he previously had proclaimed his innocence of any wrongdoing and appealed to President Ernesto Zedillo to clear his name.

But after reviewing the criminal complaint against him, a judge in the boxer's home state of Sinaloa issued an arrest warrant Monday for Cesar Chavez, whose whereabouts could not immediately be determined.

The government asserts that he and two business partners, Daniel Vicens Monsivais and Jaime Vicens Garaie, submitted \$1.4 million in fraudulent sales-tax claims to the government in 1993 through their company Gonzalez Carrasco—one of many investments the boxer has in Mexico that include "J.C." gas stations, a restaurant and real estate.

Cesar Chavez is the latest in a series of prominent Mexicans to be implicated by Zedillo's government in a campaign against white-collar crime and corruption. He also is just the latest in a growing legion of international athletes—including German tennis star Steffi Graf—who now get paid such staggering sums that out of the ring or off the court, they must wrestle with tangled issues of taxes, finances and investment.

Graf's father, Peter, is scheduled to go on trial in a German court Thursday on tax-fraud charges related to his handling

of his daughter's multimillion-dollar winnings. Similar charges have hounded baseball stars Darryl Strawberry and Pete Rose in the United States and legendary British jockey Lester Piggott in England.

But in Mexico, where Cesar Chavez is a hero and household name for millions of sports enthusiasts, Monday's arrest order was seen as the latest in a series of blows to the former super lightweight boxing champion.

Cesar Chavez lost the crown he had held for seven years on June 7, when challenger Oscar de la Hoya of Los Angeles left him bleeding and beaten in the fourth round of a Las Vegas fight.

Cesar Chavez had won 97 of his 99 previous bouts—one was a draw—and boxing experts had considered him pound-for-pound, one of the best lightweight fighters in history.

But in the weeks before the fight, the champion was dogged by the Mexican government's tax investigation. He also was publicly stung by a lawsuit his wife filed alleging domestic violence. And his sparring partner was shot to death near Mexico City in a gangland slaying that local prosecutors said was linked to Mexico's illicit drug trade.

For the first time ever, Cesar Chavez was an underdog in the de la Hoya match, for which he earned \$9 million. The headlines in the Mexican capital the following day best described his debacle, calling the bout: "J.C.'s nightmare."

After he returned to Mexico in defeat, the Mexico City daily, El Financiero, added to pain: It alleged the former champion was linked to Mexico's powerful drug-trafficking cartels—a report that Cesar Chavez said prompted him to take out full-page ads, which threatened to sue the newspa-

per for libel.

"I am the victim of a conspiracy," he declared in the ads, addressed to Zedillo, Mexico's reform-minded president. "The people I trusted—friends, compadres—have betrayed me. ... For more than 14 years, I have lived between gyms, training centers and boxing arenas. I am no saint. I am human. I have my mistakes and my defeats. But in my name, I have never killed. I have never robbed. I have never been a criminal. ... If you accuse me, prove it."

Monday's charges against Cesar Chavez follow last year's arrest of the elder brother of former President Carlos Salinas de Gortari, Raul Salinas de Gortari, in jail charged with illegal enrichment while a senior government official. He is now on trial for allegedly masterminding the 1994 murder of a top ruling party official. Other prominent Mexicans, including the former treasurer of the nation's Social Security Institute, also have been charged with corruption under Zedillo's anti-graft campaign. Several present and former governors are under investigation for alleged corruption.

The Treasury Department's crackdown on tax cheats has

netted almost \$400 million in fines and back taxes just between January and May of this year, a spokesman said.

It was unclear just how the Mexican criminal charges and arrest warrant might affect the boxing future of Cesar Chavez, who had previously said he would not talk to the media as he prepared for his scheduled fight with Joey Gamache Oct. 12 at Caesars Palace in Las Vegas.

But the charges and the cloud of suspicion that has followed him for several months have already appeared to be tarnishing his image at home.

Mexican boxing expert Jorge Aguilar, who has covered Cesar Chavez's career for Monterrey's El Norte newspaper, said the former champion has been "an example to follow" for millions of Mexican children.

"He was even well received at Los Pinos under Salinas," Aguilar said of the boxer's many visits to Mexico's presidential residence during the previous administration. "He was an idol. But his image has deteriorated. ... He started losing more matches. ... And now, he has these problems with the Treasury."

Nigerian striker Kanu has heart problem

MILAN—Internazionale striker Nwankwo Kanu, who helped Nigeria win the Olympic soccer tournament in Atlanta, has a heart problem that could end his career, a leading cardiologist was quoted as saying on Monday.

The Italian Serie A club said earlier that tests carried out by three heart specialists had shown the 20-year-old Nigerian, who played in the Ajax team that won the European Cup in 1995, had a cardiac anomaly.

A statement said that the club would "do everything necessary to achieve a clearer medical picture aimed at protecting the player's health as a priority." It promised more details on Tuesday.

Cardiologist Bruno Caru, one of the three who tested Kanu, was quoted by

Italian news agency Ansa as saying after meeting Inter officials that in his professional opinion the Nigerian "cannot play."

"What surprises me is that nobody knew about this up to now," said Caru, who leads the medical staff working for the Stefanel Milano basketball team.

"This lad has played for Ajax, he has been through the Olympics, he is not just anyone."

"And yet all that was needed was a simple electrocardiogram to detect that something was not right. The electrocardiogram would have shown that his left ventricle is overloaded, which should not be the case in an athlete."

"And subsequent tests, as has now happened, would have revealed that he has a valvular insufficiency of the aorta."

Caru said that by continuing to play, Kanu risked accelerating the problem and he compared the player to someone who had a coronary obstruction.

"If he smoked two packets a day, what would have taken three years to develop will take six months. In this case, the efforts required by sporting endeavor provoke the same kind of acceleration," the cardiologist said.

"This lad, must, sooner or later, be operated on. There is definitely a valve replacement in his future," Kanu, who scored two brilliant goals when Nigerian beat Brazil 4-3 in the semifinals of the Olympic soccer tournament in Atlanta, joined Inter in July for a reported fee of around \$2.0 million after his contract with Ajax expired. ■

Bringing the worlds of pocket organizers and PDAs together: 'Pilot' palm computer from U.S. Robotics

U.S. ROBOTICS has introduced a very attractive contender in the personal digital assistants (PDA) category of products.

This pocket-sized wonder is called the Pilot and packs lots of impressive features including seamless connectivity with a computer running Windows or Macintosh.

Apart from the features you would expect from a pocket organizer, the Pilot provides a touch-sensitive screen that makes it easy to use and comes with a plastic 'screen-pen' to tap your way along its many features. The Pilot is efficient in operation, as two AAA batteries can power the device for several months.

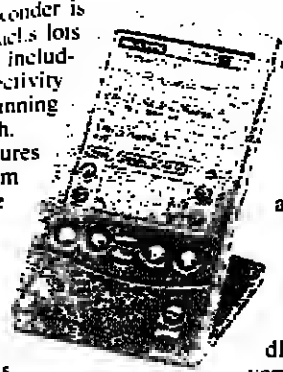
The organizer contains a memory module that the user can replace to add memory or upgrade the device. In addition, users will be able to attach communication products such as modems and pagers as they become available.

The Pilot connects to your computer in style, through a 'cradle' which looks very much like a cellular phone desk-charger. If you press the 'Hot-Sync' button on the cradle, you will get an automatic back up

and synchronizes data with the desktop.

Pilot includes Windows and Macintosh companion versions of the organizer IM applications. The desktop software serves as the gateway between Pilot and desktop applications. For example, a mail merge between the Pilot Address Book and Microsoft Word is accomplished with a simple click and drag operation. In addition Palm Operating System Architecture allows other desktop software vendors to build links between Pilot and their data formats.

The Pilot will be available in the Jordanian market for about JD 400. For more information on the Pilot and U.S. Robotics products, contact Saadi Communication Systems (SCS) at telephone 605506. ■



Microsoft internet explorer 3.0 patch available

MICROSOFT CORPORATION announced it has resolved two widely reported minor issues that some users have discovered with Microsoft Internet Explorer 3.0.

The company has posted an updated version of the Microsoft Internet 3.0 setup routine that requires less temporary hand of disk space during installation. All new downloads include the new setup automatically. The new setup does not change any code in the Microsoft Internet Explorer 3.0 product. Users who have already

downloaded Microsoft Internet Explorer are not affected by the issue.

The company will also post a patch file to <http://www.microsoft.com/ie> at 10:00 p.m. today to correct an issue with some web sites that require users to enter a user's name and password. Microsoft Internet Explorer 3.0 required users of these sites to enter their user's name and password several times to gain full access to the sites. All Microsoft Internet Explorer 3.0 users are encouraged to install the patch, which

can be done automatically by visiting a page on the Microsoft Internet Explorer Web site and downloading one automatic-update file.

The user's name and password issue, identified and reported last week, affects the use of basic authentication with Microsoft Internet Explorer 3.0. This problem did not present any security risk to Web sites or end users, it simply made using some sites unnecessarily complicated. Fewer than 10 sites on the Internet reported the problem to Microsoft. ■

What's On NETS: To pirate or not to

FOLLOWING IS an insight into the debate that has been raging on NETS, a local bulletin board service, regarding piracy. The summary below should give you a peek into what Jordanians are saying to one another inside the on-line world.

The infamous haven for JD 10 pirated software on Gardens Streets and its more-than-eager patrons appear to have stepped on some NETS subscribers' toes. In Software Piracy (6/20), which led to a 10-day debate in Better Jordan and over 20 messages at last count, Jordan, according to one message, is being robbed of the opportunity to become the next India for software developers because of disregard to intellectual property rights. The string of responses this statement elicited were easily divided into two groups: those who

support piracy and those who don't. A NETSer from the DO crowd, claims that faced with a decision between buying a JD300 original software and JD40 copied version, most would scramble for the cheaper option. Plus a talented pool of Jordanians are able to use software which they otherwise wouldn't have access to. Plus everyone's getting a good deal at the video stores with latest movies being rented for the price of about two Kit Kat bars. Nobody likes a dent in the wallet, pitches in another NETSer.

But the steadfast DON'T crowd did not waver under the fire of pro-piracy rhetoric. To excuse piracy because of the low per capita income is like legalizing theft for poor people, they argue. And to bring this statement closer to home, one young man improvises: what if Zarqa residents (of relatively

lower income) marched into Amman to remove a couple of your household belongings? They are unlikely to be welcomed with open arms. The debate takes an unexpected turn when an astute gentleman on NETS enters claims that the software piracy issue is being raised by software sellers under the false pretext of promoting national economic interests. As one would expect, an irate but controlled response was posted, and the dispute evolves into a useful discussion about the role Internet will play in distribution of software.

But to get a well-written and concise summary of the issues involved without having to track down the 24 postings on this subject, read Re (9) Re: Software Piracy (6/28) which was written by a long-time supporter of intellectual property rights. ■

Martina Hingis beats third seed

By Jeff Williams
LA Times-Washington Post
News Service

NEW YORK—The future of women's tennis unveiled itself in splendid fashion at the US Open Monday. One 15-year-old won, one 15-year-old lost, but there was a net gain for the women's game.

The Baby Martina—Martina Hingis, that is—defeated third-seeded Arantxa Sanchez Vicario, 6-1, 3-6, 6-4, to advance to the quarterfinals. The other 15-year-old, Anna Kournikova, lost to defending champion Steffi Graf, 6-2, 6-1.

"It is good to know that the future is going to show up," Graf said. "It's always important to have these new faces come out, especially since in the last few years, there hasn't been that much excitement around."

Since Graf and Monica Seles took over from Chris Evert and Martina Navratilova as the 1980s turned into the '90s, women's tennis has been looking for its next stars. Monday, Hingis twinkled.

If you were looking for a

description of Hingis, it might be part Evert and part Navratilova. She plays with the same elegant baselining style of Evert, combining it with the fire of Navratilova. When she's upset with herself, she drops her racket. When she's upset with a linesperson, she bangs the racket on the net cord. When she's upset with the umpire, she tosses her racket. This is the Navratilova in her. When she's winning points, she stays patient in long rallies. She keeps her opponent running from side to side. She keeps her groundstrokes deep. This is the Evert in her.

It was 25 years ago that Evert introduced herself to New York and became the darling of tennis by reaching the semifinals of the US Open at Forest Hills. The event was smaller and the magnitude of Evert's accomplishment was bigger. She was 16, and any teenager able to compete at such a high level was a sensation.

Now we have Hingis, a Slovakian-born resident of Switzerland, playing in her eighth career Grand Slam event 3 1/2

INTERFACE

BY ZEID NASSER

An important event for Arab users: Arabic Windows 95 launch

THE LAUNCH of the Arabic version of Windows 95 is a long awaited event for Arabic users, anxious to utilize Microsoft's latest operating system. Although Windows 95 has been available since late last year, only some Arabic users have migrated to it, as they preferred to stick to the Arabic functionality offered by Arabic Windows 3.1 or 3.11.

This is the point that makes the launch of Arabic Windows 95 so important. It resembles the next step for millions of Arab users all over the world. The transition itself is supposed to be very easy, as backward-compatibility is fully maintained. In other words, you can run all your Arabic Windows 3.1 applications like Arabic Word and Excel under the new Arabic Windows 95.

The benefits to be gained are the real attraction. Finally, Arabic users will enjoy 32-bit performance which presents the future of desktop applications.

Microsoft understands that providing 32-bit Arabic applications is what will really make Arabic Windows 95 takeoff. That's why the launch of the operating system is accompanied by Arabic Office 1995—a suite of Arabic Microsoft applications including Word, Excel, PowerPoint and more.

The official launch of Arabic Windows 95 and Arabic Office 95 is scheduled for 7 October. So, next month, as of that date, you can expect to find both packages on the local market. This brings us to the next issue which is pricing.

As of yet, there still isn't a definitive price tag for the new products. The English version of Windows 95, which has been on sale in the Jordanian market for about a year, is offered varying prices depending on the shop or the dealer you buy it from. In any case, the usual price for the English Upgrade version of Windows 95 is around the JD 95 mark—this is the version for previous Windows 3.1 users and it is the popular edition. The full Windows 95 package, complete from scratch, is usually offered to new computer users along with their systems. If it were to be bought separately, it would set you back about JD 115 or JD 120.

Everyone I talked to agreed that Arabic Windows 95 would be priced similarly to the English version, as this has been Microsoft's policy with its Arabic versions of operating systems. Microsoft Arabic Office—the 16-bit Arabized applications for Windows 3.1—is selling for about JD 450 to JD 490. It is important to remember that this package includes four full Microsoft applications for five in the case of the Professional edition which also includes Arabic Access. It is also expected that Arabic Office 95 for Windows will be sold at prices comparable to its predecessor.

Arabic Windows 95 has been in the making for about a year now, so it is only normal that Arab users expect a lot from this version. Surely, it will live up to their expectations, by providing proper right-to-left functionality and Arabization of all aspects of the operating system.

Microsoft has an impressive past at the service of Arabic users. In all fairness, and putting aside any argument regarding Microsoft's monopolistic practices, the company seriously pursues the Arabization of its products. By doing so since the beginning of this decade, Microsoft has played a very important role in spreading the use of computers in Arab homes and offices. With Arabic Windows 95, Microsoft will continue to lead the way for Arabic software developers to follow. Let's hope the road ahead is rosy, for both Arabic users and developers. ■



The 15-year old Hingis after the win

weeks before her 16th birthday. She reached the quarterfinals of the Australian, the third round of the French, the fourth round of Wimbledon, now the quarters of the Open.

With fire and with ability, Hingis ousted the veteran Sanchez, the 1994 winner here. Hingis won nearly all the long rallies and in the first set, she let Sanchez make all the mistakes.

But what was more impressive was her ability to fight through her own mistakes in the second and third sets, and to keep her composure when frustration seemed to eat into the substance of her game.

At 3-3 in the third, and a deuce point on Sanchez's serve, Hingis hit a forehand deep that chair umpire Jane Harvey called long, overruling the linesman. Hingis was upset, arguing the matter. (A CBS replay showed the shot caught the line flush.) After Hingis lost the next point and the game, she skidded her racket along the court in disgust.

She lost her next three service games, which cost her the second set and caused her to fall behind early in the third. Hingis seemed close to tears after losing that deuce game. "I am very emotional, especially on the court," she said. "It was not that I could cry on the court. I was angry."

Angry, though not defeated. After she lost her service to start the third set, she bore down. She played long, too.